

THE MUSIC OF MY HEART

ARTHUR BENNETT



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THE MUSIC OF MY HEART

BY

ARTHUR BENNETT

MANCHESTER

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TO
WILLIAM SHARF,
GENERAL EDITOR OF "THE CANTERBURY POETS,"
AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF HEINE," "ROMANTIC BALLADS,"
ETC.,

I RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBE THIS VOLUME,
IN ADMIRATION OF HIS WRITINGS,
AND
WITH GRATITUDE FOR MANY FRIENDLY
WORDS OF LITERARY COUNSEL.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE poems of which this volume consists have been written in leisure moments, and at varying intervals, during the last eight years; and the majority have already seen the light through the medium of divers magazines and papers. The whole of them have now been subjected to a careful revision. In several of the earlier pieces I discovered blemishes which nothing short of their absolute reconstruction would have removed; but, as one has naturally a fondness for the firstlings of his fancy, and as I was desirous, as far as possible, of preserving their identity, I have, for the most part, contented myself with such minor alterations as were unavoidable; and I am only too conscious of the fact

that, in spite of these emendations, they are still manifestly the productions of a novice in the art of minstrelsy.

Where I have touched upon current events, I have endeavoured to look at them from a loftier standpoint than that of mere party. It would be a degradation to Poesy to associate her with a faction, and the harp was never intended for the hustings. But it may well ring out its warning when the public honour is endangered; and, in the hour of peril, seek to awaken in the heart of the nation somewhat of the olden fire.

With the more serious pieces have been intermingled several of an opposite tendency; and the sudden changes "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," will doubtless impress some "melancholy Jaques" with a sense of incongruity. But that which has not any charm for the Jaqueses may possibly interest the Rosalinds

and the Celas, if it be my good fortune to number such among my readers; and the verses which are unpalatable to the philosopher may perhaps prove not displeasing to the fair.

A.B.

Bruche,
Warrington,
15th. November. 1888

THE MUSIC OF MY HEART.

PRELUDE.

THERE is a charm in Poesy
Beyond the power of telling ;
She is a spirit from the sky,
In realms terrestrial dwelling ;
Disclosing diamonds in the dew,
And mermaids in the ocean ;
And the unfathomable blue
Above the storm's commotion.

Translating into tender words
The sighs in snowy bosoms—
The music of the brooks and birds,
The breathing of the blossoms ;
The veil that shrouds futurity,
With smiles, asunder flinging,
Till in the wildernesses we
Can see the roses springing.

Oh ! sweet it is the lyre to take
And chant of Nature's beauty ;
Or strike it till, with chords awake,
It calls the world to duty ;
Sublime to sing the songs of hope
For our beloved nation—
Hope for the moody misanthrope,
And hope for all creation.

And sweet it is to sweep the strings
When ruby lips desire it ;
Imagination's swiftest wings
Are spread, should they require it.
Maidens are queens, to genuine bards,
With glory in their glances ;
And more the praise their smile awards
Than gold the poet fancies.

To offer homage to the fair,
Muse on the great star-splendour,
Weave wreaths to deck the hero's hair,
And keep the world's heart tender ;
Rouse men to aspirations high,
And make Utopias real—
Such is the minstrel's destiny,
And such my own ideal.

And when, with this intent, the lyre
 I tune in hours of leisure,
My very soul seems all on fire
 With unimagined pleasure.
What if I never win the bays
 To loftier singers given ?
For him whose heart is in his lays
 To merely sing is heaven.

And from my heart my music flows,
 And if the world should flout it,
Poor is the praise the world bestows,
 And I can do without it ;
But at my feet the daisies spring,
 God's sunshine gleams above me ;
And so "for those I love" I sing,
 "I sing for those who love me."

ALBION.

CAME a man of aspect dreary,
In a time of tribulation ;
And, in tones of evil omen,
Dismal eras he predicted
For the darling of the ocean,
Sacred to the bravest, fairest,
Noblest of earth's sons and daughters ;
Home of freedom, bright tiara
On the great earth's brow.
"Ancient nations," quoth the prophet,
Who, like Albion, were exalted,
Would have scoffed at him who told them
Of the doom that was impending ;
For their hearts grew proud within them
As the bounds of empire broadened,
And they deemed themselves immortal ;
But, amid their idle boasting,
Suddenly the night descended.
And so Albion in the mantle
Of the darkness shall be folded ;
And her flag, sublimely floating
Where the icebergs stand, like phantoms,
And the sun forgets his shining,

“ And above the maze of islands
 Where the winds with spice are laden,
 Shall not keep itself unsullied ;
 And the regions where, beneath it,
 Corn and wine and milk abounded,
 And the forge was redly flaming,
 And the looms were all in motion,
 Shall relinquish their allegiance,
 And, in dreadful indignation,
 Continents reject her ruling.
 From the universal waters
 Shall her argosies be driven,
 And the races scarce remember
 That, of old, she bore the title,
 ‘ Mistress of the Seas ! ’ ”

Up arose a youthful patriot,
 With an eye wherein a fire flashed,
 And a form robed in enthusiasm,
 And, in silver tones majestic,
 Thus he made reply.
 “ Shame upon such weak forebodings !
 Though the times are full of trouble,
 And the shadow of the tempest,
 Like a ghost, is grimly rising,
 Shall we quail before its fury,
 Or, like men, prepare to meet it ?
 ‘ Greece and Rome would ne’er have fallen
 If their sons had said they should not ;

“ And, while millions in our borders
Feel the flame within them burning
At the mention of the greatness
Of the island of their fathers ;
While traditions that, like trumpets,
Stir the heart to emulation,
Round our hills in music linger,
And are whispered by the woodlands,
And repeated by the rivers ;
While we all may live in freedom,
And, in living, learn to love it,
Albion cannot fall !
No proud foe shall tread the valleys
That our sires with blood defended ;
Or shall rob us of the regions
Where the plains are robed in plenty,
And the ancient laws are cherished,
And the ancient language spoken ;
And no pomp of lordly vessels,
Clad in steel, and with the thunder
In their throats, shall sail triumphant
And usurp our old dominion
Of the azure main.
Sooner than our mother’s glory
Should, with lapse of time, be tarnished,
All the children she has nurtured
On the bosom which is heaving
With a thousand thoughts heroic

“ In her name would die !
Die we will, should Fate require it ;
But, while breath is in our bodies,
While our hands can wield a sabre,
Or our lives be consecrated
To the service of the nation,
Never shall she fall ! ”

CAMBRIA.

(WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT ON THE SUMMIT
OF SNOWDON.)

SCALING the desolate hills in the glow and the
glamour of sunset,
Marvellous visions of loveliness, reaching the misty
horizon,
Broke on my wandering gaze like a trance on the
soul of the sleeper.
Azure of skies overarching, and lakes that were
shrouded in shadow ;
Pinnacles shining with snow, the stainless bequest
of the winter ;
Gleaming expanses of ocean, and gloom of mysteri-
ous valleys ;
Outlines of dim, distant islands—the silver of minia-
ture rivers ;
Flash of swift waters descending, and garments of
shimmering vapour,
Flung by the clouds o'er the cliffs of a terrible
chaos of mountains,
Girdled the height that I gained with a splendour
which baffles description.

Then, as the darkness approached, and, at last, to
the arms of the billows,
The orb of the morning, retiring, illumined their
faces with blushes ;
While the orb of the eve, in her whiteness, crept
hazily up from the eastward,
A halo encompassing each that was wrought of the
hues of the rainbow ;
And, in the zenith, the stars issued forth from the
tents of the twilight,
Thoughts of the land that beneath me lay sleeping
in grandeur supernal
Stole to my soul, and my spirit awoke to a wonder-
ful vision.
As, under the spell of the moonbeams, I revelled in
dreamily musing
O'er the unspeakable glories that stretched, in a
magical prospect,
Far past the range of the eye, though endued with
the sight of the eagle,
On the environing mountains, their sceptres like
meteors flaming,
I saw, in the infinite glimmer, the Cambrian mon-
archs departed.
Towering above them, was Arthur, the valiant, the
wise and the blameless,
Heart in his eloquent gaze, and a king in the form
of his features ;

And there was the resolute Gryffyth, in courage akin
to the lion,
Who dreaded not uttermost battle with Harold, if
so he might safeguard
The hills and the dales that he loved with a passion
which made him heroic ;
There was the doughty Llewellyn, as bold as when
warring with Edward ;
And there were the bards to whose numbers, inspired
with a fury terrific,
Legions of fierce mountaineers thundered on to the
spears of their foemen,
Laughing at death, and despising the prowess that
sought to enslave them—
Uriens, Cadwallos, and Hoels, a host of harmonious
harpers.
These, in the sheen of the starlight, methought held
a mystical conclave,
Till, from the depths of far valleys—from hillside
and seaside and moorland,
Flocked, in impalpable thousands, the sons of the
Cambrian nation,
Making prostrations evincing the homage they
yielded to greatness.
Then, with the might of a storm, in the mountains
sonorously rising,
The shades of the monarchs harangued them, and
bade them be true to their duty,

And rampart the realm with their weapons, should
 ever the threat of aggression
Be flung at its crags, or a finger be lifted to limit
 its freedom.
When the weird voices were ended, a sound of in-
 spiriting harpings
Thrilled o'er the hills, and, amid the assembly of
 Cambrian sovereigns,
Forms more familiar I sighted—the kings of the
 home of my fathers ;
And, chief of the gathering, Harold, and *William,
 and Henry, and Edward—
No wild war-glare in their glances, but love and
 regard and alliance—
The monarchs of envious races, the feuds of the
 past unremembered,
Vowing eternal goodwill, while the ghosts of the
 multitude gazing
Murmured applause ; and, from far, like the sound
 of the sea at a distance,
Albion's children responded with musical murmur
 of voices ;
And I knew that the nations were one ; that the
 summons for freedom to rally
Was a summons to rally *with* us, for a freedom that
 each of us cherish—

* William the First, Henry the Third, and Edward the First.

A summons to stand by our side and confront all
the lands, if 'twere needed
To guard our delectable isle from the foot of the
haughty invader ;
And, in our society, tread in the path that is sacred
to Progress ;
And rouse the dull Earth from its torpor, and lead it
to Liberty's temple,
And from its tired limbs strike the shackles, and into
its bosom breathe comfort ;
And show it how olden dissensions and horrible
feuds internecine
May vanish for aye, and the realms that once wrath-
fully wielded the war-axe,
And rushed into battle with hate in their voices,
their quarrels forgetting,
May live in sweet unison, one evermore in all noble
endeavour,
And rivals alone in their zeal for the weal of the
world.

CALEDONIA.

(WRITTEN ABOARD THE "CLANSMAN," DURING
AN AUTUMN CRUISE AMONG THE HEBRIDES.)

"O CALEDONIA! stern and wild," I here,
Amid thy mighty rocks, and beauteous isles,
And flowing stretch of land and sea and sky,
Where Mother Nature wears her grandest robe,
Would sing thy praise. Thy sons are like their hills
In hardihood, in strength, in steadfastness.
We, sons of Albion, would hail ye, brothers,
And vow, with you, to cherish more and more
The bonds of love and mutual sympathy
Which long have held possession of our souls.
And if, as would-be prophets sometimes say,
Dark clouds o'erhang Britannia's sacred shores;
And should opposing forces rush to wrest
The heritage of freedom from the free,
They'll find us ready, and your hands and ours,
By Cambrian hands assisted sturdily,

Shall hurl the shivering enemy away,
Cursing the day he saw the light, as back
These rugged mountains hurl the foaming waves.
Would that our bruised and bleeding sister, Erin—
Self-bruised, in some degree, perhaps—would cease
To idly sorrow over dying wrongs,
And join the league that we, and ye, and they
Who cluster round Eryri's feet, have sworn
To keep inviolate till doom shall strike !
Erin, we trust thou wilt ! We three are one !
Be of the group ! United, we'll maintain
Our spreading Empire's ancient majesty
Uninjured, spite of croaker's doleful tales,
And madly misanthropic fear of fall,
Until the giant world grows hoar with years,
And Time himself begins to think of death.
Why wilt thou linger in the bitter cold,
And gnaw, inflexible, thy heart away
With futile pinings for a lone career
Which could but end in huger woe ? To-day,
Where Scottish hearts are beating loyally,
I think of future glories that await
A fourfold nation ; and I breathe the hope
That, as the sunshine from these mountain tops
Bids the thick mists begone, so speedily
Our triple love for thee shall dissipate
The lowering clouds that long have girt thy shores ;
That thou, whose generous sons are brave as these

'Mong whose delightful glens I glide entranced,
In this, the land of mountain and of flood,
May'st leave the tracks which lead down to the
dark,

And, with thy sisters three, espouse the right,
And tread the paths of peace and liberty.

ERIN.

(SUGGESTED BY A MAGNIFICENT SUNSET, WITNESSED FROM THE DECK OF THE "TYNWALD," AS SHE LEFT THE QUIET WATERS OF CARLINGFORD LOUGH.)

A VESSEL bounding o'er a billowy waste,
A range of rugged mountains on her stern,
And, over them, where slowly in the west
The sun was vanishing, a crimson sky.
Strange was the scene, but stranger were the
thoughts
Of one who paced the vessel silently,
While vaguer grew the landscape on the lee,
And night in storm descended. Thus he mused,
As, in a trance, he eyed the awesome glow,
And drank his fill of the weird loveliness.
"The universe is full of parables ;
And in the unimaginable light
Which sheds its splendour on the purple peaks
That fade behind me, I can darkly read
The tragic story of sweet Erin's shame.
Her sun has set in anger, and her skies
Are fiercely flaming— not with sunset fires,

“ But with the red glare of the burning home ;
Her haunted hills grow crimson—not with tints
Shed from the chariot of the Lord of Day,
But with the blood of murder ; and a night
Deeper than Nature’s broods above the land.”

The voyager was sad. Again he mused,
And chanced to recollect how some averred
That, when the sun set redly, ’was a sign
Of a fair day ; and straightway, as he gazed,
“ A change came o’er the spirit of *his* dream : ”
The night of blood was past, and Morning peeped
Above the haggard mountains radiantly,
And, in the beam, what marvels were revealed !
Assassination’s deadly knife was sheathed,
And Agitation’s frenzied tongue was dumb.
The League’s fell power was broken, and no
more

The name of Freedom served to shelter crime.
The owners and the tillers of the soil
Were both secure, and lived in mutual love ;
For wiser ruling had, with lapse of years,
Healed the old sores, and “ centuries of wrong ”
Were but remembered nightmares. Justice bore
A kingly sceptre now. The very fields
Were greener than aforetime, and the realm,
In sooth, an “ Emerald Isle.” Her valiant sons
And comely maids, their miseries forgot,
Were even braver and more beautiful

●

Than in the days of old. No clamour rose
Against their brethren on fair Albion's shore.
The twain were as one family at last—
Were one in their devotion to the law,
One in their homage to the common throne,
One in their strife to swell the Empire's fame,
And one in proud regard for liberty:—
Were bound by silken bonds more strong than
steel—

The bonds of loyalty, the bonds of love,
The bonds of holy zeal to win the world
To honour, virtue, peace and righteousness.

The vision faded from the western sky,
The lonely peaks grew shadowy, the shores
Were hidden in the darkness, and the waves
Sobbed as they felt its melancholy sway;
But, to the dreaming voyager, the dream
Yet burned with more than visionary hues,
And in the future mystically merged,
A vivid and divine reality.

“THERE’S A GOOD TIME COMING.”

“THERE’S a good time coming.”—Yes!
On the balmy zephyr’s wing,
Through the sweet and sunny air,
Steals the smiling form of Spring,
To a world that was always fair ;
But, in Winter’s sad caress,
Had cried, with a piteous prayer,
For the vanished Eden-happiness,
For the bliss the angels share.

But the hoary Winter stands aghast,
To his icy sceptre feebly clinging,
For the scent of flowers is floating past,
And he hears the linnets singing.

And the earth shall again be a paradise,
“With no serpent’s trail of slime ;”
And the heroes who have vanquished Vice,
And fought with the grisly monster, Crime,
Shall be lulled by Eolian harmonies,
And walk in a purer clime.

But their hearts were heavy as, wearily,
They climbed the hills along the road ;
And the winter winds howled drearily,
And they carried a weary load—
A load of dreams they counted hollow,
And cares that tortured them like fire ;
But the upward path they were fain to follow—
They were bent on climbing higher.

And they rested upon this rock,
That the Truth would yet prevail ;
And they grandly withstood the shock
Of many a boisterous gale ;
And they made the most of the radiant hours
That even in winter often shone,
When their faith began to fail ;
And they thanked the Eternal Powers
That the snowdrop grew, though the
warmth was gone,
And the ivy laughed at the hail.

But their work moves swiftly on !
They shall gain the meed they merit ;
And, though their hair be hoary,
And their faces worn and pale,
The humblest of them shall inherit
The guerdon and the glory.

Oh, yes ! "there's a good time coming"—
A time we've awaited long ;

And the ghosts of the ancient sorrow
To their graves shall grimly throng ;
For the knell of woe is booming,
And I hail the blest to-morrow
When the heavens shall thrill with song.

Ah ! fair shall the dawning be,
And the tears shall then be few ;
And, at sunrise, we shall see
The diamonds in the dew.

Despair itself shall learn to laugh,
And Hope shall kiss the brows of Madness ;
And every son of man shall quaff,
With thirsty lip, the wine of gladness.

The love-lorn maid who, in anguish, sighs,
By the faithless swain forsaken,
Her face suffused with a strange surprise,
From her misery shall waken,
And shall wipe her liquidly-luminous eyes,
And a tenderer troth be taken.

And the souls that shrank from the nipping frost
Shall bathe in the balm of the buds of June :
And gentle lives no more be crossed,
Nor on Time’s waters roughly tossed,
Like waves ’neath the angry moon.

And in his temple Mars shall shiver,
And cast his crimson crown away,
His fierce dominion fled for ever—
His former glory gone for aye.

And Peace, with lilies in her bosom,
And honeysuckles in her hair,
Shall bid the desert-places blossom
And the white robes of harvest wear.

And Tyranny, with looks of wonder,
Shall watch the ancient fetters fall ;
And realms be linked whom oceans sunder,
And men, at last, be brothers all.

“HOW JOYFUL IT IS!”

GARIBALDI died with the window of his room open, while the sun was setting behind Corsica. Before the last agony began, a bird alighted, singing, on the window-sill. The veteran saw it and stammered, “*Quanto è allegro!*” (“How joyful it is!”)

“How joyful it is!”

Thus murmured Garibaldi, as he lay
Awaiting the last agony, and gazed,
From out his open window, at the play
Of crimsoning wavelets, where Apollo blazed
Like one transfigured, as he paused to write,
Before departing, on the azure sky,
That stars would glisten through the silent night,
And sunrise follow it eternally;
While on the lattice lit a little bird,
And told its rapture to the passing breeze
So tunefully that, as the hero heard
Its unpremeditated melodies,
Great gladness seized him, though his end drew
near,
And at his elbow yawned the hungry tomb;
For Hope was hovering in the atmosphere,
On wings of splendour, banishing the gloom.

“HOW JOYFUL IT IS!”

“How joyful it is!”

Humanity may imitate the dead,
 And cheerily the syllables repeat—
 They flash, like jewels, through the tears we shed,
 And blossom into bluebells at our feet.
 For, from the dawn of earliest infancy,
 To trusting spirits, life abounds with joy:
 The babe that listens to the lullaby,
 The smiling maiden and the blithesome boy
 Exemplify the utterance; the youth,
 Eager to travel the untrodden ways,
 His face suffused with pleasure, owns the truth
 Which manhood echoes with a shout of praise,
 And feeble age acknowledges in song,
 Though, on the locks once raven, winter lies—
 Joy in green foliage; in the fragrant throng
 Of flowers, forget-me-nots of paradise;
 In the weird mountains, crowned with wreaths of
 snow,
 And in the valleys sacred to the free;
 In the gay arch of Iris, and the glow
 Of Luna's silver lamp of mystery.

“How joyful it is!”

Joy in the kisses and the tender sighs
 Of ardent lovers; in sweet household cares;
 In children's laughter, and in sparkling eyes,
 And in good deeds—the holiest of prayers.

And friendship is another name for bliss,
 Whose gentle fascination all may know ;
 And joy is offspring of the harmonies
 That from the inmost soul of being flow
 As from the heart of Israfel. From things
 Inanimate—the woods, the winds, the streams ;
 From human voices, and the magic strings
 Where lissom fingers wander, till it seems
 As if an Amphion struck the chords, there steals
 The sylph called Music, the embodiment
 Of all we dream of joy, whose voice appeals
 To the tired mortal, in life’s battle spent,
 With wondrous visions of Elysium,
 Beneath whose healing trees the blest abide ;
 And thrills the bard, who, though the crowd be
 dumb,
 In words of flame, sings of the rising tide
 Of knowledge, freedom, love, for all mankind—
 Superior joys for earth’s most joyous ones ;
 And, for the weary bosom of the hind,
 Divine sufficing and unshadowed suns.

“How joyful it is!”

Like Garibaldi, at the gate of Death
 Our pallid lips may still, in triumph, form
 The words ; the favoured few, whose every-breath
 Is luxury, and the unsheltered swarm

Of toilers—each may find in life a zest,
And somewhat of the jubilation prove
That froths its woe like wine ; and each, in quest
Of happiness, though fields of ether move,
Fired by the story of the realm afar
With seas of chrysolite and diamond spires ;
And, through Imagination’s “ gates ajar,”
Catch the faint music of the heavenly lyres.
There’s joy for all—the young, the strong, the old ;
For man and woman, and for rich and poor ;
Fountains of crystal spring from sands of gold
Amid the desert places ; to allure
The human heart and fill it with delight,
The firmament is mystically strewn
With constellations, and the earth is dight
In rainbow garments, and the hoarse bassoon
Of ocean thunders one great symphony ;
Life is impregnate with strange ecstasies ;
The very dying may exult to die,
For Death may lead them to the radiant skies.

THE YOUNG PHILOSOPHER.

“ PHILOSOPHY’S not popular,
And, in the dull world’s eyes,
The masher, with his choice cigar,
Deserves a lady’s sighs

“ More than the man who up the height
Of dim Parnassus strays,
And wanders, speechless with delight,
In Wisdom’s flowery ways.

“ What cares the modern cricketer
For humbug such as that ?
He thinks him crazy to prefer
An epic to a bat.

“ The fair admire him even less,
And all their actions show it ;
They like the latest thing in dress
More than the latest poet ;

“ Love tennis more than Tennyson,
And tattle more than truth ;
Deny the bard the benison
Breathed on the brainless youth

“With easy manners, careless gait,
And collars duly high—
Deaf to the voices of the great,
Blind to the flashing sky.

“And hence the maiden I adore
In vain I seek to win ;
For all the wealth in Wisdom’s store
She doesn’t care a pin.

“I speak of Spenser, and she yawns ;
Of Homer, and she nods ;
Of dewy eyes, and rosy dawns,
And Hellas and its gods—

“She only strokes, with fingers white,
The pet upon the rug ;
And, poet as I am, to-night,
I’d rather be a pug !

“I tell her of old Pan’s decease ;
Of Hector’s deeds sublime ;
Of Jason and the Golden Fleece—
She murmurs, ‘ How’s the time ? ’

“I talk of science and of art,
And other topics deep ;
And I discover, with a start,
That she is half asleep.

“She disregards such themes divine—
What next shall I essay?
I’ll press her pretty lips to mine,
And kiss her, if I may!”

’Twas done!—she tried to frown; but lo!
With smiles her face was lit;
In fact, she seemed to like it so
That he repeated it.

“You do not care for poetry,
Or philosophic bliss?”
The answer sparkled in her eye:
“I’d rather have the kiss!”

“GOD SAVE IRELAND!”

God save Ireland from enemies outside her borders and from those within! God save Ireland from eruel men of whatever class, be they—and I trust there are very few—grasping landlords and rack-renting landlords, or be they dishonest tenants, or midnight marauders! God save Ireland from the pestilence that walketh at noon and the terror that stealeth at night! And I believe that God will save Ireland, for, with all her faults, there is that amount of virtue amongst the Irish people; there is that love of their country, that love and devotion of men to their families, that willingness to sacrifice for them, which are abiding and homely virtues that do much to save a country, and to enable God's laws to be respected; and, with the earnest desire that God may save Ireland, I thank you for having heard me.—*Right Hon. W. E. Forster, Esq., M.P., at Tullamore, 6th. March, 1882.*

HE stood erect, facing an angry crowd
In raving treason trained, and schooled in scowls
By glib-tongued traitors to their country's cause,
Who hated him and the immortal realm
Whose honour was his daily care, whose smile,
In peril, his unspeakable reward.
And though, while he was talking, to his heart
The bullet might have whistled deathfully,
His manly visage showed no sign of fear.
Well had he worked for Erin, but the meed
Of praise he merited was unbestowed.
Nay, Calumny's foul lips on him had cast

The venom of vile slanders ; and the voice
 Of the misguided multitude assailed
 The hero with fierce epithets of scorn.
 But, as some rock, about whose granite base
 The waves howl madly, lifts its rugged crest,
 Amid the clamour, unappalled to heaven,
 He stood unmoved, a form majestic,
 While hoarse rebellion thundered through the land,
 And towered above it with unchanged resolve
 To stop the quarrel of the centuries.

And now, unarmed, he meets the gloomy throng
 Whose weal he lived for, but who misconstrued
 Their benefactor, greeting him with frowns
 And words of hatred ; and, at intervals,
 Base innuendoes darkly muttering.
 In burning tones, he told them of the sins
 That stained their cause ; denounced dishonesty ;
 Rebuked the cowardice that sheltered Crime,
 And kept the felon from the doom decreed ;
 And branded murder as the thing deserved.
 Next he discoursed of happier days to be—
 Of Albion’s love for Erin, and her wish
 To ease the anguish of the ancient wounds,
 And pour in oil and wine, and from her face
 Wipe off the traces of the former tears ;
 Until the stern, gesticulating crowd,
 Awed by the presence of an Englishman
 Who knew no flinching, listened and were dumb.

Then, with a fervor which awoke their cheers,
He murmured, "God save Ireland!" and was gone.

With Forster's earnestness, the prayer to-day
Is breathed by every English citizen,
And "God save Ireland!" is her sister's cry.
Teach her poor sons the curse the assassin brings
Upon their isle. Incline her wealthier ones
To loftier lives and larger charities,
And bid her humbler children strive to pay
Their proper dues. From midnight massacres
Good Lord deliver them, and evermore
From evil hide them with Thy mighty shield.
From Famine's wolfish eyes, from pestilence,
May they be free. May disaffection cease,
And Treason hide its hideous head in shame.
Let Erin's sons be loyal to the law,
And what they hold as harsh in it will die
When Crime dies. Then, in the approaching days,
Shall Erin rise from out her wretchedness.
Her children's virtues that, in darkness, shone
Like stars conspicuous—their love of home,
Their strong devotion to the kith and kin
That make home holy, and the ardent fires
Of inextinguishable patriotism,
Shall glow with rarer brightness; and fond hands
And loving hearts for weeping Erin weave
A golden destiny. Albion and she

Shall meet in mutual embrace ; the kiss
Of reconciliation, strangely sweet,
Shall bind two nations, henceforth only one,
In bonds unbreakable.

“God save Ireland !”

Yes ; God will !

LINES WRITTEN FOR THE FIRST PAGE
OF A POETRY ALBUM.

You ask me here to write my name,
And for this page to mould a rhyme ;
But how shall I presume to claim
A place among the bards sublime
Of whose best thoughts, it seems to me,
An album is the treasury ?

For here Eve's daughters, half divine,
Will trace the words that shall not die ;
Then turn, and, to these words of mine,
A favouring smile perchance deny ;
And if my lines displeasing be
In their bright eyes—ah, woe is me !

And here my friends, a host of youths
With strong right arms, and hearts as
brave,
Will chronicle melodious truths
That bloom from many a poet's grave ;
And I am loth unworthily
To figure in such company.

Here haply Tennysonian strains
Will mingle with the song of Keats ;
A Spenser's silvery refrains,
A Shakespeare's verse may deck these
sheets—
How feeble will my rhymings be
In such renowned company !

My song grows dull in such an air,
And I intrude amid their bays ;
For musical beyond compare
Are all their genius-laden lays.
It is presumptuous in me
To join such noble company !

And yet, in spite of all I've said,
Your beaming eyes my song inspire ;
The critiques of the fair I dread.
But their approval I desire ;
At least they'll judge me leniently—
I'll join the goodly company !

IN PHENIX PARK.

I SAUNTERED through a realm of trees,
And shrubs, and flowers, and verdant lawns—
The scent of hawthorn on the breeze,
And, in its shelter, herds of fawns ;

And, nigh at hand, white mansions, 'mid
Sweet gardens—catching, now and then,
The murmur of a city, hid
By rustling leaves from human ken.

And, southwards, in a line of blue,
Were revelations of the hills ;
And everywhere the vivid hue
Of all the foliage that fills

The arms of June and makes her fair ;
But, wandering beneath its shade,
My roving fancy void of care,
A sudden awe my footsteps stayed ;

For in my path two crosses, wrought
Of rugged pebbles, I espied ;
And here I knew two comrades fought
With fiends, and here they nobly died.

And thereupon, as in some play
That moves towards a tragic close,
The picture slowly passed away,
And soon a darker scene arose.

'Twas spring, and every budding grove
With emeralds began to glow ;
Calm filled the skies that beamed above,
Balm brooded on the fields below.

And Peace, to tearful Erin's shores,
Had turned to tenderly dispel
Her misery ; and, 'mid the roars
Of welcome that, like music, fell

On their glad ears, her * heralds came,
Through streets of faces wreathed with
smiles,
The sister nation's love to claim—
To soothe the greenest of the isles ;

To fling ajar the prison doors,
And set her captive children free ;
To right her wrongs, and heal her sores,
And banish her disloyalty.

* Earl Spencer and Lord Frederick Cavendish.

The festive day draws near its end ;
But still, for him, that storm of cheers
Is echoing as, with * a friend,
One of the twain his mansion nears,

His bosom full of holy zeal
To usher in serener days.
I see them come, stalwart and leal,
And in their path the sunlight plays ;

And from the thickets, loud and clear,
There swells the carol of the birds ;
And in the golden atmosphere
There dwells a joy too deep for words.

When lo ! I notice in their track,
With glittering knives, a murderous crew ;
Their hands are raised for the attack—
They fall on Burke—the other, true

In death as life—oh, scion meet
To grace the annals of thy sires !—
Leaps to the rescue, darts to greet
The deadly blows ; and all the fires

* Mr. Burke.

That stir the souls of England's brave
Are in the scorn with which he speaks,
And in his manly strife to save
His wounded comrade from the cliques

Who war with daggers, love the dark,
And plot in devil-conclave dire!
But vain are all his blows; and stark
In death lies Burke, and equal ire

Wields the bright steel that seeks *his* breast.
Futile his struggles—from his heart
The crimson flows; and soon, at rest,
He lies who played the hero's part,

Beside the friend he died to save.
But both shall live in men's regard,
And both shall find a hallowed grave
In Britain's love—a rich reward

In Erin's dawning happiness.
And now a scaffold I can see;
And some, who wear the felon's dress,
Are launched into eternity.

And Justice balances her scales,
And then on heaven to witness calls,
How Crime is crushed, and Right prevails ;
And so the shadowy curtain falls.

And when, once more, I watch it rise,
To Tara's harp, a triumph-song
Is thrilling ; and, with eager eyes,
I seem to gaze upon a throng

Of doughty men and charming dames,
Proud of a nation blest by Fate,
Freed from its wrongs, cleansed of its shames,
To Peace and Wisdom consecrate.

For in yon pillar, close at hand,
From whose gray ashes, carved on high,
Soars the young Phoenix, for the land
I read a kindred destiny.

ON CROAGH PATRICK.

ONE summer morn, I clomb the peak
By saintly Patrick whilom trod,
Crowned by a simple shrine to God,
Where earth's tired souls the Father seek:—

The mountain whence, at his decree,
So venerable legends tell,
From Erin's shores, as by some spell,
The serpents fled mysteriously.

A lordly summit, with a host
Of island children at his feet ;
Like Tritons stern, or Nereids sweet,
They clustered all along the coast.

And brother mountains, grim and old,
Stood watching them from far away :
In distant groups, white houses lay,
Like lambs within a giant's fold,

Or dotted o'er some mighty field,
With lakes to drink in ; and dim clouds,
Like ghosts, slid by in silent crowds,
And, vanishing, again revealed

The purple skies, the hills, the isles,
And the immeasurable deep,
Whose waters sang themselves to sleep,
Or softly rippled into smiles.

Viewed from this height, the under-land
Had lost its flaws, and grown more fair,
And gained in amplitude ; and where,
To those below, the iron hand

Of Poverty was darkly spread,
And earth was barren, heaven unkind,
And, on the breath of every wind,
There rose fierce wailings for the dead,

A sunny landscape met the eye,
As fair as that from Pisgah seen—
A huge circumference serene
Of promise and felicity.

And, straightway musing, I discerned
How life in this found embleming :
Ah, me ! who to its levels cling,
In their despondency, have learned

How doubly bitter is the bane :
They stumble over open graves,
See corpses in the shining waves,
And, on the fields, the curse of Cain.

But, to the man with strength to climb
The summits of the hills of faith,
The human woe, the blight of death,
The stony regions red with crime,

The waves, with crests in anger curled,
Are hidden by a golden haze ;
And he is privileged to gaze
On grander visions of the world.

In verdure clad, its moorlands lie,
Fortunate Islands throng the main ;
And, over all the human pain,
Hangs, like a dome, the azure sky.

SOUL-SOLACE.

WE look into the past ! some with strong sighs
For vanished bliss, and fond rememberings
Of lips of nectar lost eternally ;
Some with the consciousness of misspent years,
Ignoble thoughts, unworthy deeds, and lives
Aimless, or aiming for an evil goal ;
Whilst even the best of us have much to mourn—
Neglect of golden opportunities,
Half-hearted service, ghostly visitings
From One whose bony fingers bear a scythe,
Visions that faded rainbow-like, and lo !
At horrid intervals, Despair's dark form
Grim-wandering in a dreary world. The voice
Of Memory murmurs of Elysian days
Departed ; or recalls the aching hours
Whose recollected emptiness doth add
To the present void.

Let fall the curtain, then !

The past *is* past ! God cannot alter it !
Why thus lament the irremediable ?
Though olden friends prove false, or leave the
scenes

Their smiles have sanctified ; or lie asleep
In death's inexplicable silentness,
The stars still glisten and the skylarks sing,
And love still lives, and love is born of love.
And, if our feet have left the narrow path
Which, winding upwards, leads to lasting peace,
That path is still existent ; and, though rent
With many a thorn, and wending wearily,
They still may gain its quiet and its rest.
It is not meet to idly waste to-day
In vain regrets for wasted yesterdays,
And self-inflicted penance for the past.
Let us be brave, and resolutely seek
To win again whate'er was good in it—
To shun its pitiable slips ; and strive
To make the shadowy future musical
With our accordant laughter, as we train
The flowers of life, and trample on its weeds,
And slay the vices that, with siren-tongue,
Mised us ; till, with lapse of time, we see
The ruby sunshine banishing the fogs
That chill the pulses of this shuddering sphere.
Right must prevail, and Wrong is doomed to die.
Egyptian darkness cannot last for aye.
The trusting soul, at midnight, may discern
Upon the summits of the eastern hills,
Glad Faith and Hope, like radiant cherubim,
Heralding with songs the morn. And, if we work

To aid the holy cause, and wait awhile,
Crime shall turn pale and perish, and Despair,
On sable wing, sink hellwards gloomily,
And sounds of joy inhabit every wind,
And life become one bright perspective, closed
With glimpses of illimitable heaven.

THE MOON AND THE SEA.

(*Blackpool, 4th October, 1884.*)

'Tis night! The moon is at the full,
A globe of silver in a dome
Star-spangled; and the breeze is cool
That wanders from its ocean-home—

The home that lies asleep below
The yellow splendour of the strand,
And softly glistens in the glow
That floods with light the listening land.

And there is music on the beach,
And all the eve is fraught with calm;
And lips are moved to gracious speech,
And human hearts breathe out a psalm.

But look! where yonder shadow glides
Across the silver of the sphere!
It spreads and thickens till it hides
The affrighted orb; the night grows drear:

And hark! the tide crawls up the shore ;
Voices of moan are in its waves ;
And awful is its whispered lore—
It tells of wrecks, it talks of graves.

A brooding silence haunts the sky,
The very stars turn pale and swoon ;
And nigher steals the ocean's sigh,
And denser darkness swathes the moon.

And earth is emblem'd in the scene !
Man's orbs of hope know like eclipse ;
His brightest prospects oft have been
Obscured ; and yet, from human lips,

Break wailings weird as those which tell
The secrets of the solemn sea—
While o'er heaven's light vague shadows dwell
Earth's voices moan mysteriously.

Bitter the moaning, sad the sky—
The tides are tears, the shade a shroud.
Black shadows, will ye never fly ?
Waves, must ye always wail aloud ?

Æons have dawned and fled for aye,
And still strange darkness covers man ;
Old Time himself is growing gray—
Still eyes are wet and cheeks are wan.

Must it be ever so? I cry,

When, slow, the dismal shadow shifts;
Shines out the silver disk on high,
The horror fades, the nightmare lifts;

Ebbs the hoarse tide, and faintlier steal
Its whispers up the broadening shore;
And all the clouded stars reveal
Their dazzling faces, as before.

And, from my heart, the shadow slides,
And earth's woe-voices seem to sleep;
Fair omen in the zenith rides,
A splendour sparkles on the deep;

Gloom flies the azure firmament;
Heaven's lamps wax brighter, and, below,
The tide of human tears is spent—
I note the ebb, I miss the flow.

Earth's eyes flash joy as yonder spheres
Flash light, earth's sobs to silence sink,
As, dreaming of the golden years,
I wander by the ocean's brink.

DREAMING AND WORKING.

'Twas Christmas Eve, methought, and I was
dreaming ;

Strange fancies entered my rejoicing soul ;
And I beheld a second Eden gleaming
From torrid woodlands to the frozen pole.

The spirit of the Christ had seized the nations—
Peace and goodwill had overflown all lands ;
The skies were thrilling with the exultations
Of god-like men, in number as the sands

That gird the billows of the awful ocean,
No longer slaying each his fellow-man ;
But linked by love, unstirred by war's commotion,
Strong earth to till, free the blue heaven to scan.

Hushed was the wail of Slavery's bemoaning ;
Silent the broken sob of Poverty ;
And stilled the anguish of the captive's groaning,
And dumb the voice of human misery.

Disease had vanished, like a hideous vision,
And Wrong from his high eminence was hurled ;
And music sounded, and an age Elysian,
Soft as the sunrise, dawned upon the world.

With unknown gladness all the birds were singing,
 The clouds were gilded with unwonted gold ;
 Serener fountains in the air were flinging
 A rain of jewels, and from Nature rolled

A mighty pæan, louder than the thunder,
 Sweet as the song of the far seraphim.
 I listened, for my soul was smit with wonder—
 I started, woke, and lo ! it was a dream.

And, round the house, a mournful wind was
 roaming ;
 And ceaselessly the feathery flakes of snow
 Fell on a silent form that, in the gloaming,
 Homeless and hopeless, wandered to and fro.

About the icy streets the waifs were straying,
 In city cellars shivering infants cried ;
 In every alley foodless ones were praying
 For the dry morsel that the Fates denied.

To me, the wind with harmony was haunted—
 “ Peace and goodwill ” pealed from a hundred
 bells ;
 No joy to them the mellow chiming granted—
 It mocked their misery, the notes were knells !
 Then, in the room, an angel, to my seeming,
 Stood by my side and whispered in mine ear :

“Dost thou desire fulfilment of thy dreaming?
And would'st thou have the silver dawn appear

“Where the long darkness of the midnight
lingers?

Then clothe the naked—give the hungry food;
And, with warm impulse and unwearied fingers,
Go bravely forth, intent on doing good.

“’Tis not by picturing the distant morning,
And dreaming of the glory that shall be,
That we shall gain it; but by boldly scorning
The thought of self, and struggling manfully

“To lessen all the weight of human anguish,
To dry the weeping eyes, the sick to soothe;
To offer solace to the souls that languish,
And show the ignorant the paths of truth.

“And while, in every steeple, bells are ringing
Of ‘peace on earth’ and of ‘goodwill to men,’
And cheerily the choristers are singing
The heavenly song, awake and work; and then

“The dream will glow with purpose, and shall
heighten

The hope that makes the humblest toil a joy;
And in thy path a paradise shall brighten,
And earth claim kinship with the starry sky.”

ON THE DEATH OF A DOG.

A LETTER to hand ! With pleasure 'tis scanned,
Till I come to an item of news
That is matter for grief, and darkens the leaf
Which intently I haste to peruse.

To honour the dead, bards ransack the head,
And their Pegasus furiously flog,
And elegies frame which endow them with fame :
I sing of the death of a dog.

But the Muse is not proud ! From the mystical
Cloud
She stoops to the Primrose that blows
By the rivulets brim, and shares in the hymn
Which it sings as it silverly flows.

And, if sunward she hasten on pinions that glisten,
And starward deliciously roam,
She does not disdain on the earth to remain,
And is fond of "The Old House at Home."

The Sofa was sung, and its praises have rung,
Ever since, from the lips of the wise ;
And an ancient Arm-chair, in the hands of the
fair,
Brings the rain from the heart to the eyes.

The mellow-tongued Gray wrote a musical lay
 Deploing the death of a Cat,
His genius revealing, our sympathies stealing ;
 “ And what could be nicer than that ? ”

A Mouse was the theme—pray, ladies, don't
 scream !

I know your objection to vermin !—
To which Burns tuned his lyre with the usual fire ;
And I think I may safely determine,

If the public declare that an ancient Arm-chair
 Is a subject befitting a singer—
If cats may be lauded, and field-mice applauded,
 My harp in a Dog's praise to finger.

To return to the billet, if, reader, you will it ;
 It hails from an intimate friend ;
And it tells how a pet I can never forget
 Has come to a tragical end ;

How a terrier true, having little to do,
 Left the parlour and ventured outside ;
Saw something like meat, and proceeded to eat—
 'Twas poison, alas ! and he died.

He Toby was hight, and was the delight
 Of three nineteenth-century Graces,
Who treated him well, as the writer can tell,
 And were frequent and loud in his praises.

And, with due gratitude for the delicate food
That often his palate would please ;
For his place on the rug, and the feminine hug,
And the seat on his mistresses' knees,

He always obeyed each beautiful maid,
Wherever she wandered would go ;
Was worthy reliance, and barked a defiance
If he only imagined a foe.

I have mentioned his food : 'twas unusually good,
If not very good for digestion ;
But he never demurred, though one thought it
absurd
To see him devour, without question,

Tomatoes and coffee and Everton toffee,
Cakes, chocolate, oysters and ham,
Soups, salads and stews, shrimps, sugar, cachous,
And pickles and jellies and jam.

He was partial to pheasant, thought sausages
pleasant,
Liked nuts, and, *mirabile dictu !*
He would eat orange pips with a smack of the
lips—
“ Hold ! ” somebody cries ; “ I convict you

Of cramming—in vain you seek to explain ;
 We are not to be easily flammed ;
 Orange pips, my good sir ?” That is what
 I aver—
 I cram not—’twas Toby who *crammed*.

Unlike the low-bred, and the commonly fed—
 The terriers whose tastes need refining ,
 He could hear people strum without looking
 glum,
 Or warble their worst without whining.

And, while soft strains were stealing from piano
 to ceiling,
 And melody hung in the air,
 Gripped by the forepaws, ’mid the general
 applause,
 He would dance—this I’m ready to swear !

For Toby could waltz, though not without faults,
 My candour compels me to add ;
 His motions lacked grace, and his pitiful face
 Would look : “ You are really too bad ! ”

BUT ’tis time I should end, for I cannot pretend
 A tithe of his virtues to number.
 “ Every dog has his day,” and then passes away
 To the regions of infinite slumber ;

Unless we allow, as the Indians avow—
The brave *red-skinned wights* of the west—
That dogs may arise, and, 'neath happier skies,
Roam the flower-spangled fields of the blest.

And, if dogs be immortal, and pass the dark
portal
Of death, and as dogs rise again,
He will merit a place with the best of his race,
And celestial biscuits obtain.

His deeds were not great ; it was not his fate,
Like Gelert's, a child to protect ;
But he aye did his duty to hearth, "home and
beauty"—
What more could his nation expect ?

And, friends, I regret the death of your pet,
And the letter I close with a sigh ;
For my memory strays to the halcyon days
That shall dwell in my heart till I die.

And, in fancy, I come from the tedious hum
Of the town, as the twilight descends
A fortunate guest, to the place I love best—
To the pleasant old house of my friends.

The lamp has been lit, and together we sit,
Shut out from the cares of the world ;

And our bliss is complete, and there, at our feet,
A terrier lies cosily curled.

And we talk and we laugh, and, too quickly by
half,

The moments of merriment flee ;

There are smiles on the faces of each of the
Graces,

The faces of each of the three,

And Toby awakes, and is feasted with cakes,

And again, as in vision, I see,

Through the haze of the years and the mist of
my tears,

The home that was heaven to me.

“THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE.”

As o'er the sky of summer steals the cloud,
As o'er the rich day-glory draws the night,
As harvest-fields by sudden storms are bowed,
As adders crawl where flowery ways invite,

As thoughts of winter mock the joys of June,
As dreams of terror shake the calm of sleep,
As mists obscure the splendour of the moon,
As lie the dead beneath the sapphire deep—

So the delight of man is mixed with pain ;
Across life's landscape, frequent shadows
come ;
And eyes that glow the blinding tears retain,
And hearts are aching, though the lips are
dumb.

For, in the moments consecrate to bliss,
When life seems music and pure revelry,
The brain is tortured by such memories
As crush the mirth and bid the music die.

Stands there young manhood, feigning to rejoice
 In whispered converse with that lissom belle—
 'Tis only feigning, for the chosen voice,
 When last he heard it, breathed the word,
 "Farewell!"

Behold the maid, who, to entrancing airs,
 Moves sylph-like, while gallantry speaks her
 praise :
 Ah ! she is happy ? Grief her bosom tears—
 False is the lover of the former days.

Yon twain !—how pleased they view the festive
 halls,
 Laugh with their guests and mix among the gay ;
 Hush ! o'er the scene the gloom of midnight falls !
 Where is their firstborn ? In the churchyard
 gray !

Distance for aye has sundered kindred souls,
 Inconstancy has seared the tender breast,
 Dark Death has stolen the beloved-tolls,
 In every heart, a knell for those at rest.

We miss the magic of remembered speech,
 We lack the looks in the accustomed eyes ;
 We see the shadows, but in vain we reach
 To clasp them and appease our agonies.

Keen is the anguish of the sense of loss,
Bitter the void left when the loved are flown ;
But let us nobly bear the destined cross,
And walk with courage, if we walk alone.

For joy, though intermingled with regret,
Like ivy, nestles round the heart of man ;
Nor has the utmost wrath of winter yet
Sufficed to sever them since time began.

And joy increases, pain grows ever less—
Heart-aches shall end in the bright days to be,
Elim arise in the world's wilderness,
And human moaning turn to melody.

LINES ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY
WHO SAID THAT SHE DID NOT LIKE
KISSING, BY A YOUNG GENTLEMAN
WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE HER.

WHAT! not like kissing? Really, 'tis surprising!
Such an assertion simply startles me,
And half upsets my confident surmising
That all the girls esteemed it ecstasy.

What! not like kissing? Kissing writes the poet,
Revives fair Eden in this world of woe;
'Twas Byron said it, and he ought to know it—
He loved the ladies, as his verses show.

What! not like kissing? I myself, enchanted
By such experience as the Fates have given,
Can vouch it thrilling, and my memory's haunted
By dreams of kisses that were sweet as heaven.

You don't like kissing? What is more delightful?
Red lips in contact—'tis supremest bliss!

I know old maids and "sich" pretend it's
frightful—

The grapes are sour—they lack the chance to
kiss.

What! not like kissing? Come, she must be
chaffing!

A wealth of mischief sparkles in her eye ;
She smiles, looks charming—ah! I see she's
laughing ;

She says she doesn't, but I mean to try.

THE MESSAGE OF THE STARS.

BRIGHTLY the lamps of the city gleamed ;
Over the river a splendour streamed ;
The gloom was gleaming with points of flame,
And, out of the blackness, a glory came ;
And the winds were hushed, and the air was cold,
And ever above me, in silence, rolled
 The glimmering, golden stars.

But, while I gazed on the scene below.
I thought of the mighty city's woe ;
And I knew that the earthly darkness hid
Hot brows, red eyes, bruised hearts ; that amid
The glamour, the glisten, the pageantry,
A sob went up to the shrouded sky,
 And tingled to the stars.

And I said : " Ye orbs, that, night by night,
O'er the fields of space diffuse your light,
And vie with the lamps that mortals trim
When the Evening comes in her garments dim,
In the depths of the darkness pierced by you,
Are there other faces wet with the dew
 Of tears, ye host of stars ?

“’Neath the gloom of the city, though grandly lit,
By the fading ashes in anguish sit
Women who weep and wring their hands ;
For the Famine-Spectre fiercely stands
At the empty board, and they vainly cry
For help in their utter misery—

Is it thus with you, O stars ?

“ Do your fair ones barter themselves for gold ?
Is love in your regions bought and sold ?
Are hearts that the heavens seemed to mate
Ever kept apart by an iron Fate
Within the bounds of your shining shores ?
Is Mammon the god the crowd adores
In the coruscating stars ?

“ Does Disease come, gibbering ghastlily,
To rob the liquid and luminous eye
Of its hidden fire, and to steal the rose
That in the cheeks of your maidens glows ?
Does the skeleton, Death, bid your strongest
quake,
And a ghoulish and horrible banquet make
On the sons of the flashing stars ?”

I paused, and a faint and far reply,
Soft as the gentle zephyr’s sigh,

Weirdly stole to my spirit's ear,
Low and lute-like, yet strangely clear ;
And, as I listened, my pulses thrilled,
And my soul with a sudden calm was filled,
 And I thanked the radiant stars.

For I heard them say that the human tears
Would to jewels turn in the after-years ;
That the universe's woe would wane,
And its cries be hushed, and its infinite pain,
In the æons to be, find a sweet surcease,
And life be music and joy and peace,
 On earth, and amid the stars.

THE HUMAN HOPE.

“ And it is not a dream of a fancy proud,
With a fool for its dull begetter :
There’s a voice at the heart that proclaims aloud,
‘ *We are born for a something Better !* ’ ”
“ *Hope :* ” Lytton’s “ *Poems and Ballads of Schiller.* ”

WHEN the world seems weighted with care and sin,
And dark clouds obscure the heaven,
And I hear the universal din
Of humanity, anguish-riven,
The thought of Schiller comes like balm,
And I own myself his debtor
As I breathe the words, with a sense of calm,
“ ‘ *We are born for a something Better !* ’ ”

When I grieve over human littleness,
And the herd of ills that track us—
Think how things curse that were meant to bless—
How the red joy-juice of Bacchus
May hide a serpent to sting and slay,
Or a fiend the soul to fetter,
With faith unshaken, I cheerily say :
“ ‘ *We are born for a something Better !* ’ ”

When I see men worship the Calf of Gold,
 Though the stars are earthward peeping,
And the daily knell of the death-bell tolled,
 And the weary millions weeping,
With aching bosom, I sadly sigh ;
 But each star is a shining letter
In the words which flame on the gloomy sky :
 “ *We are born for a something Better !* ”

When, in fancy, I hear the cannon crash,
 And the battle-bugle shrilling,
And watch the glittering falchions flash,
 And the crimson blood distilling,
I dare to dream of a dawning age,
 For this world of beauty fitter,
When the nations shall no longer rage—
 They “ *are born for a something Better !* ”

And I know that the sorrows that haunt mankind,
 And the countless forms of error,
Are doomed to vanish, on wings of wind,
 By the sunrise smit with terror ;
That the centuries wait for the monster, Hate,
 And in chains have they sworn to set her ;
And the night grows bright, as I cry, elate,
 “ “ *We are born for a something Better !* ” ”

THE HERO OF KARTOUM.

A TIME of unimaginable crisis !

Brave garrisons encircled by fierce foes
Along the stream that, towards the home of Isis,
Through dreamy deserts mystically flows!

What craft can compass their emancipation ?

What art arrest rebellion's rising flame ?

Who shall allay the public agitation ?

Men called for Gordon, and the hero came !

He came at once, a lighter duty leaving,

To face fresh fortunes by the Nile's far wave ;

And, readily the nation's trust receiving,

Went proudly forth the garrisons to save.

His aim was noble—peaceful was his mission,

But there was danger in the path he trod ;

And England thrilled as, in admiring vision,

She saw him start, imbued with faith in God.

Through arid leagues of hostile country riding,

He gains, at last, the distant city's wall ;

And its inhabitants, in him confiding,

Cast off their fears, and grateful prisoners fall

Prostrate before the man who strikes asunder
Their chains, and bids them gaze upon the day ;
And half the world looks on in silent wonder,
And millions name him when they kneel to pray.

And all seems well until the growing legions
Who rally round the Mahdi make a move,
Emerging grimly from remoter regions,
The valour of the infidel to prove ;

And, gradually, in dark array, beleaguer,
The affrighted city, prophesying ill ;
But bold is he, and for the battle eager,
And meets them with indomitable will.

The aid he asks for from beyond the ocean—
The helping hand of those who rule the state—
He asks in vain, but his sublime devotion
War cannot lessen or neglect abate.

* Two trusty friends, with equal ardour burning,
Stand by him in his perils manfully :—
They stand together, every danger spurning,
A hero-trio, with a purpose high—

A hero-trio, born to live in story—
A hero-trio, 'mid a traitor band ;

* Colonel Stewart and Mr. Power.

The destined heirs of everlasting glory,
Most worthy children of the fatherland.

For spies were in their camp, and half who carried
The uniform of warriors cowards were ;
On every side the capital was harried,
And some gave way to feelings of despair.

Not so the three, for British blood was flowing
Within their veins, and towers of strength were
they,
The ancient virtues of their nation showing,
Sage in the council—fearless in the fray.

But soon his comrades, sailing down the river
With messages, * anticipate his doom.
Alas ! their clasp of sympathy shall never
Solace again the Bayard of Kartoum.

Alone amid his armies, half forsaken
By craven statesmen who reject his schemes,
He guards the city still, with soul unshaken,
Nor ever of surrender basely dreams.

Rulers of England, why this hesitation ?
The danger thickens, and the moments fly :
Oh ! if ye would escape the reprobation
Of all the ages, do not let him die !

* Stewart and Power, despatched to Berber "to communicate concerning the Soudan," were wrecked near Boni Island, and afterwards enticed ashore and murdered.

More deadly grows the fury of the fighting,
 Within the walls conspiracies are rife ;
 The grain is failing, and the foe, uniting,
 Look fiercely forward to the final strife.

* * * * *

At last, the silence of the Nile is broken—
 A great flotilla cleaves the silver stream ;
 By those who man it, Spenser's tongue is spoken—
 They come, with hearts that glow and eyes that
 gleam,

To aid him, and, inspired by emulation,
 Each seeks to be the first to reach the place ;
 To share the honour of his liberation,
 And swell the chorus of the hero's praise.

But direr grows the prospect of disaster—
 The grain is eaten—yea, the dogs devoured ;
 Ply sturdily your willing oars—row faster ;
 The shadow of catastrophe hath lowered

Long o'er the city and its chief devoted—
 The crisis nears—row readily, ye brave,
 Or soon the flag that on the palace floated
 Shall droop, in tatters, over Gordon's grave.

* * * * *

From post to post he wends, with eyes unsleeping ;
In every street his manly voice is heard ;
A multitude of souls are in his keeping,
And hang, distracted, on his lightest word.

And every hour that stirring word is wanted
To tell them that assistance draweth nigh ;
For Famine stalks Kartoum, and he is haunted
By whispers of impending treachery.

But many, with the sternness of the stoic,
Defy the agony of hunger's throes,
And grasp their guns, and still, with hearts heroic,
The armies of the enemy oppose.

* * * * *

And now, amid the yellow deserts, glisten
Avenging bayonets ; to martial strains
The solitudes of Æthiopia listen,
And English soldiers muster on her plains.

Half mad with thirst, their bodies enervated
By weary marches under scorching skies,
They meet the foe with courage unabated
When, in their might, its dusky legions rise

A way across the wilderness refusing ;
And twice they vanquish warriors as the sand

In number, but, in nobly winning, losing
Heroes lamented by the fatherland.

* * * * *

The bloody strife is o'er ; upon the water
Steamers await their coming ; and some glide,
In triumph, from the dreadful scene of slaughter,
Eager to rally to their comrade's side.

And loud resounds the realm's congratulation,
And hearts beat proudly, and men's hopes are
high ;
And the world watches, dumb with expectation,
To see them succour him who scorned to fly.

But, while they sail, they hear an awful mutter,
Swelling to thunder as they near Kartoum ;
And, on the shore, the scowling natives utter
Black words that tell them of the city's doom.

Their hopes grow faint—they urge their course
unceasing ;
They speed towards the goal of their desires ;
Is it in vain they yearn for his releasing ?
In vain the valour that each bosom fires ?

At last, a glimpse of palms their spirit gladdens ;
Against the blue of heaven, white walls are seen ;

They nearer draw ; but ah ! what horror saddens
The brows of those who battle for their Queen ?

No flag of England floats above the palace !
No plaudits greet them as their boats draw nigh !
Dregs of disaster lurk within the chalice
That whilom foamed with wine of victory !

From either bank of the eternal river,
A shower of shot whistles a welcoming ;
The hiss of shells sets all the air ashiver,
Defiant voices from the ramparts ring,

Waves on the wind the banner of the Prophet,
Reeks from the earth the savour of red blood :
The ancient city is a very Tophet—
Fanatics stand where England's hero stood !

* * * * *

* "Too late," indeed ! For, worn with futile waiting,
Their bodies bent, their hearts bowed down
with grief,
The leaden moments only aggravating
Their misery, despite their dauntless chief,

* The exact circumstances of the fall of Kartoum and the death of Gordon are still a matter of dispute. The version adopted here is that which is given in Major Kitchener's official notes upon the subject.

Is it a wonder that the people faltered,
And begged him from the struggle to refrain ?
That some he trusted with the rebels paltered,
No longer able to endure the strain ?

Or when, with weary eyes, they saw an ocean
Of their fierce foes advancing, in the night,
Towards the city walls, that strange commotion
Possessed their souls, and, in the sudden fight,

Unnerved them ?—that the little strength
 remaining
After the horrors of their war with Fate,
Was insufficient ; and the rebels, gaining
The ditches, filled them ; stormed the Western
 Gate,

And overpowered the soldiers left to guard it,
And through the awe-struck streets rushed
 deathfully,
Like a black wave, with nothing to retard it,
Or like a tempest o'er a quiet sky ;

While others to the Boori Gate came stealing,
And sought to seize it by a swift attack ?
But, from its portals impotently reeling,
Their broken forces crowded darkly back ;

They could not make an entrance, and their
madness

Expended all its hail of blows and failed,
Until their allies came, with shouts of gladness,
And in the rear the garrison assailed.

Meantime, to Gordon crept the tardy warning
That those he trusted from the rebels flew ;
And from the palace, in the early morning,
He calmly issued, with a faithful few

Inspired by his example, to discover
That all his prowess could no more avail ;
The die was cast—the hero's work was over,
And on the breezes came the sound of wail,

The tramp of many warriors, and the roaring
Of voices thirsting after human blood,
That from the streets, in ruddy streams out-
pouring,
Gave the grim vultures promise of rich food.

And scarcely had the valiant soldier sallied
Into the open, with his soul aflame,
Leading the little company who rallied
Around him in his danger, than they came

Across a band of fierce fanatics, striding,
Red-handed, through the ruin they had wrought ;
And with wild cries the English name deriding,
And vowing vengeance on the man they sought,

And, finding, at his breast their weapons levelled,
Till, riddled with their shot, he proudly fell ;
Then rushed to further massacre, and revelled
In one huge carnage, like the fiends of hell,

And turned the roads to rivulets of slaughter,
Surrounding ghastly islands of the slain ;
While, in the rebel camp across the water,
A hideous pæan drowned a shriek of pain.

Where now was he who, through long months of
waiting,
Had stood alone and kept a realm at bay ?
The folly of his country expiating,
Dead on the bloody street the martyr lay.

But his example shall endure for ever,
To shame the coward and to fire the brave ;
And England, in her heart of hearts, shall never
Forget the hero in his nameless grave.

THE HEART'S UNBELIEF.

Oh, no! I never will believe
That wealth denotes the worth of man;
That riches roguery retrieve,
Or free the fool from Wisdom's ban,
Or make the miser more than little;
Or that the full purse compensates,
In Reason's eyes, one jot or tittle
For icy hearts or empty pates.

Oh, no! I never will believe
That love from love of lucre springing,
Upon life's pilgrimage, will weave
Rose garlands whose aroma, clinging,
Will perfume all the air we breathe,
And make our very grief seem sweet;
And, in the winter days, bequeath
The fragrance of the summer heat.

Oh, no! I never will believe
That honesty is less than wise,
Whatever woes the soul aggrieve—
Though fickle Fortune should despise
The man who merits all her guerdon,
And Knavery in chariots ride,

While Rectitude must bear the burden
Of angry wind and adverse tide.

Oh, no! I never will believe
That "ignorance is bliss" abiding;
That it is folly to receive
The light the ages are providing
To guide the mind that, cramped and chained,
Will fail to grasp the glowing sky;
And, by the bigot's hand restrained,
Be forced to crawl, though born to fly.

Oh, no! I never will believe
That Hate is half so strong as Love;
Or that the hopes to which men cleave,
In agony, will phantoms prove;
Or, in the issue of the battle
Betwixt the giants, Right and Wrong,
That Right shall hear the death-knell rattle,
While Wrong roars out the triumph-song.

But, in my soul, I do believe
That tender hearts are more than money;
And Love too noble to deceive,
Or sell for gold its Eden-honey;
That Error is a ghost which fears
The distant footsteps of the Day;
And Right, through all the rolling years,
Moves on to universal sway.

THE CRISIS.

(WRITTEN IN MAY, 1885, WHEN, OWING TO THE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAD ARISEN IN REGARD TO THE DELIMITATION OF THE AFGHAN FRONTIER, ANOTHER WAR WITH RUSSIA WAS ANTICIPATED.)

RUSSIA, beware! We want not war—
Justice is all the realm requires ;
And, so ye grant it, be it far
From us to kindle Discord's fires.
But we have duties to fulfil—
On us the fate of millions lies ;
Nor shall we scruple blood to spill
To guard the Empire's destinies.

Russia, beware! The idle dream
That Britain's power has passed away
Shall vanish in the battle-gleam,
Where sabres flash and trumpets bray.
If what in fairness we demand
Your arrogance decline to yield,
Resolved we are, on sea and land,
Unto the death the sword to wield.

Russia, beware! The men who fell
At Crecy and at Agincourt
Have children in whose bosoms swell
Hearts flinchless as the hearts of yore ;
And, ere to arms ye fiercely fly,
'Twere well your history to scan :
Hark! from the past the warning cry :
“ Have ye forgotten Inkermann ? ”

Russia, beware! With us allied
Are warriors countless as the stars ;
And we shall battle side by side
With India's thronging sons of Mars :
Not false, as ye have madly guessed,
To us who labour for their weal ;
But ready, at the Queen's behest,
Their honour with their lives to seal.

Russia, beware! To lend us aid
Troops leave the far antipodes ;
And with Britannia's sons arrayed
Are soldiers from across the seas.
And, should we need it, there will come
Brave legions from the Land of Snow,
Who pant to hear the throbbing drum,
And charge, with us, the common foe.

Russia, beware! From every zone,
In time of peril, shall arise
Armies who make our strife their own,
And thirst to share our victories.
One spirit shall inspire the breast
Of all who love Victoria's laws ;
And all the Empire's sons attest,
With blood, the justice of our cause.

FORGET ME NOT!

A TOKEN in this little keepsake see
Of a friend's wishes for your future weal—
A friend across whose faithful memory
Your words and looks and ways are wont to
steal
With strange enchantment, and whose daily path
Your presence has with added radiance fraught ;
And, 'mid the glamour of life's aftermath,
Forget me not !

Forget me not ! Never can *I* forget
The merry voice and the expressive eyes
That flashed with mischief when our glances
met ;
The wit that sparkled in your prompt replies ;
The graceful form, the conversation coy,
The smile that a rare fascination wrought,
The interviews impregnated with joy—
Forget me not !

I trust that often in the future we
 May meet as in the sunny days gone by,
And jest with all the olden jollity,
 While happily the golden moments fly ;
But, if this ardent wish of mine prove vain,
 Should Fate refuse me such a pleasant lot,
And if but seldom we should meet again,
 Forget me not !

BOOKS.

YE varied volumes that adorn the shelves
Of my beloved library, to me
How dear ye are—the telescopes of truth—
The guides that indicate the narrow path
Of wisdom—the nepenthe for all woes—
The finger-posts that point to paradise.
Friendship is strangely sweet, but frequently
Its grasp is hollow, and its tongue deceives ;
And those we trusted, and whose faithfulness
We fancied proof against all chance or change,
Will leave us helpless in the evil day.
Not so with ye ! Alike in weal or woe
Your precious balm ye meetly minister.
If poor, possessing ye, we're rich indeed ;
If rich, ye make us richer ; if bereft
Of those we clung to as the ivy clings
To the strong stone, still may we cling to ye
For counsel, aid and mighty solacing—
Ye never fail !

And sweet is ardent love,
Which realizes what we dream of heaven ;
And fascinating are the perfect shapes

Of those by Nature fashioned to enchain
The mind of man—the Venuses that lure
The coldest by their irresistible charm.
But ah! too often, dazzled by their smiles,
We wend with them through By-path Meadows,
smooth

And easy to the heedless wanderer,
But leading to the dungeons of Despair,
Where some have languished in such loneliness
As seems to eat the very heart away.
In life, the fair are fickle, and the eyes
That beam the brightest also wound the worst.
But, in your sacred covers, we may gaze
On Guineveres divinely beautiful,
Nor know the pang of Guineveres proved false ;
Admire the grace of exquisite Ettarre,
Nor feel young slighted Pelleas' agony ;
Or find a gentle Enid, endlessly
Loyal to him who loved her.

'Tis our lot,

Perchance, in this dull clime, to lack the luck
To meet with those who claim our sympathies,
And have the wishes and the wings to soar.
In vain we seek the simple fellowship
Of kindred spirits ; and we inly chafe
To escape the Lilliputian tribe who buzz
Inanities in our o'erwearied ears,
And mingle with a larger race, whose aim

Is somewhat loftier than the lust of gold.
 We turn to you, and all the greatest minds
 Of all the ages stoop to talk with us.
 We can commune with Homer! Virgil tunes,
 For our behoof, his echoing chords again ;
 And Dante tells his melancholy tale.
 For us, Cervantes plies his ready quill,
 And Chaucer quaintly sings, and Shakespeare
 speaks,
 And Milton rolls his thunder! At our call
 Flock orators, philosophers and bards—
 The ancient sages, and the master minds
 Of later eras—eager to unlock,
 For us, the lore of every time and tongue ;
 And we may “ enter on our list of friends ”
 Names written as in star-fire on the scroll
 Of deathless fame !

 The world is wonderful ;
 How bright the dews are, and how sweet the
 breath

Of honeysuckles, clustering creamily
 In lonely places where the thrushes sing.
 Sweet is the babble of the rivulet,
 Through leafy mazes slowly murmuring,
 By banks of bluebells ; and that voice is sweet
 Which haunts us as we linger by the sea.
 And what magnificence is in the clouds—
 What marvel in the mountains—in the lamps

Which blaze for ever through the night's domain
What revelations, and what mystery !
We are encompassed by a thousand forms
Of loveliness ; but underneath it all
Lies the keen sting ; and, from the frequent pain,
We yearn to fly to fancied scenes afar,
And there, like Arthur, heal us of our wounds.
Ye are enchanters ! We invoke your aid,
And lo ! we are transported to the shores
"Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly ;" reach the land
Where blooms the lotos ; tread the happy isles
Along whose coasts old Triton sounds his horn ;
Walk by the margin of the silver streams
Where laughing naiads veil their limbs divine ;
Or watch the nymphs reclining robelessly,
In the lush woodlands, on soft beds of flowers.
Then, sorrowing, from the journey we return
To face life's trials, and the lot lament
That in its harshness so belies our dreams.
Romance gives place to dull reality ;
And, notwithstanding the supremest joys
That in the fabric of the actual world
Are woven, for more perfect joys we pine,
And crave the glamour of the ideal world.
Again to you we look, and all our souls
Pulsate with hope the while we read of realms
Like that revealed by wandering Hythloday,

Where men were ruled with wisdom, and all strove
Together for the weal of all ; or note
Atlantis, nestling 'mid the ocean foam ;
Or, from the palace of Queen Mab, behold
The glory of a renovated sphere.
For, as we read, within the heart grows strong
The thought that man may make the earth as fair
As ever poet dreamed it or sage feigned ;
And all the voices of the wise and good
Proclaim the possibility, and vow
That grander laws than Solon's shall be framed
To elevate the nations ; and the lips
Of History teach us that, from age to age,
The race grows nobler. Yesterday the fool
Laughed at the vision realised to-day.
To-day the cynic lamentably scoffs,
Exhibiting his imbecility,
At hopes which, next day, their fulfilment find.
And oh ! prophetic tomes, if tenderly
I love you, and am fain to tell my love,
Because ye are the friends that never fail ;
Because ye give me access to the bowers
Of peerless beauty, and invoke the great
From every quarter of the spinning globe
To be my comrades and my counsellors ;
Because ye lead me to the fabled haunts
Of gods and heroes in creation's prime,
And make me master of the shadowy lore

Of utmost eld—I prize ye most because
Your magic leaves are luminous to me
With visions of “an awful rose of dawn”
Which fires the confines of the universe,
And tinges hell’s dire caves, and, turning gold,
Climbs the cerulean skies ; and, in the beam,
I see humanity, with weary feet,
Lay down its burden, and the sad world swing
To music onwards everlastingly.

THE WHITE ROSE.

THE maid was fair and the youth was fond—
'Tis a favourite theme for a tender lay—
And their hearts seemed linked by a silver bond
That would link them still when their heads
were gray.

But the world is strange, and the life of man
With shadows darkened, with sorrows crossed ;
And the day that with pomp of sunrise began,
At eve, may be troubled and tempest-tossed.

And souls that awake to a dawn of bliss,
May gaze, at noon, on a clouded sky ;
While lips that have thrilled to the morning kiss
May quiver with sorrow when night is nigh.

He went intent on a *tête-à-tête*,
And to secret music his pulses moved ;
For as blithe as the linnet that meets his mate
Was the lover at meeting the maid he loved.

She welcomed him, and their talk flowed on
Merrily as the streamlet flows ;

And the gladness-hour had almost gone
When a jesting word to his tongue arose.

She bade him desist ; but, playfully,
Thinking she jested, he breathed it again ;
The joke was as harmless as joke could be,
Yet it somehow kindled the maid's disdain.

For she flushed as she heard it, and then let fall
A foolish sentence which spoke her ire ;
But it woke the pride that sleeps in us all,
And mingles the wine of life with fire.

Hot was the anger that flashed in his eyes,
Great was the rage that glowed at his heart ;
And he looked at the maid with a dumb surprise,
But his look said loudly, "We twain must part !"

And he turned to go, though the thought of parting
Was the bitterest thought in the world to him ;
And the tears to his lashes were almost starting,
And the day grew dark and the sunshine dim.

She saw, and then softly murmured, "Stay !
I did not mean it !—'Twas said in haste !"
And a smile as sweet as a morn in May
From her visage the anger-wrinkles chased.

And from her bosom a rose she took,
White and fragrant, and proffered it.
Could he resist the witching look ?
Did not her accents the maid acquit ?

Was not the flower a tender token
Of sorrow for syllables she recalled ?
The words should be treated as if unspoken—
His soul should no longer by anger be thralled.

Faded the frown from his gloomy brow—
He clasped the rose, and forgave the giver ;
And he framed, in his heart of hearts, a vow
To treasure the gift for ever and ever.

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

IN the autumn's pomp, I, musing, came
To Senlac, while the trees
With a thousand hues were all aflame
As they fluttered in the breeze ;
While the autumn glory hung
In the enamoured air,
And the sun his golden largess flung
Of splendour everywhere.

But I thought of an autumn long ago,
When these hills with weapons gleamed ;
And the haughty feet of a foreign foe,
To my brooding fancy, seemed
Again to shake the sward ;
And, as I mused, I sighed ;
For I stood on the hills where William warred,
On the field where Harold died.

I saw the confident advance
Of the Conqueror's chivalry ;
Saw the armour glitter, the war-steeds prance,
And the sacred banner fly ;

Heard * the giant minstrel sing
As defiantly he rode
His taunts in the Saxon ear to fling,
Till he bit the bloody sod.

And I saw the valorous array
Recoil from the hero band
Who held the doughtiest at bay
In their love of fatherland ;
Who, in glorious phalanx formed,
All the Norman hosts defied,
And laughed, though they like locusts swarmed,
On the field where Harold died.

Once more I saw the fiery clash
Of the many and the few ;
Saw the rage in the eyes of the warriors flash
As the battle-fury grew ;
Saw William's war-steed slain,
And the dauntless rider fall,
And the hopes of the invaders wane,
And a shudder smite them all,

Till they fled, in horrible dismay ;
While Saxon hearts beat high,
As, with added zeal, they turned to slay
The foes of liberty.

* The famous Taillefer, who preceded the Norman army, "tossing his sword in the air and catching it again while he chaunted the song of Roland."

But lo! their fallen lord
Another horse bestrides,
And they rally at his thrilling word,
And follow where he guides.

His voice is heard above the roar
Of the flying armament,
As he plunges into seas of gore,
On victory intent.

There is magic in the sound,
And their hearts grow strong again ;
And fearfully they heap the ground
With the bodies of the slain.

And some assail the Saxon bands
Whom lofty breastworks shield ;
And some the living wedge which stands
Out in the open field.

The first in haste recoil ;
The others feign retreat,
And over the empurpled soil
They crowd with flying feet.

And triumph lights the Conqueror's brow,
For the wedge is in their wake,
Its steady phalanx broken now ;
And all the hillocks quake
As his haughty knighthood turn
And charge the scattered host ;

And the Saxon hearts within them burn,
For they deem the battle lost.

Yet, back to back, the charge they bear,
And all their foes defy,
Their flashing axes in the air
Still whirling deathfully ;
And, with their weapons bright,
A remnant carve a lane
To life, and, struggling up the height,
The battered breastworks gain.

But the furious Normans follow fast,
And hurl their whole array
Upon the stronghold ; and, at last,
The outer lines give way ;
And, awed, they now behold
The inner breastworks rise,
Manned by the boldest of the bold,
With fury in their eyes.

And the baffled enemy fall back
From the gloomy barricades ;
And in vain is the thunder of the attack,
And the lightning of their blades ;
For those inner breastworks hide
Gurth, Leofwine, the king ;
And around the flag stern warriors bide,
Still bent on conquering.

And if, till the shades of night shall fall,
And the sun sink in the main,
They can still preserve that quivering wall,
Their monarch yet may reign.
And the stormy throng they dare
As the rock resists the wave ;
And the faintest-hearted heroes are,
And the very cowards brave.

And the Norman arrows, falling low,
Their spite on the ramparts spend ;
For they mock the wrath of the raging foe,
And the Saxon host defend.
And William's spirits fail :
Has his prowess lost its spell ?
Are his wily schemes without avail,
And the free invincible ?

But a thought is in his fertile mind—
If aloft his archers aim,
The murderous arrows their mark may find,
And victims fiercely claim.
And many a fateful shaft
Comes whistling through the air ;
And soon fresh triumph crowns his craft,
And the death-birds wait their fare. ~

For an arrow strikes King Harold's eye,
And his royal blood grows chill ;
And the Normans rush more mightily
Up the slopes of the crimson hill,
And around the ramparts surge
Like an ocean, mad with ire,
And against them all their forces urge,
Till they win their heart's desire.

For the valiant Saxon warriors strew,
Like leaves, the grisly field ;
And the living, though their souls are true,
And their weapons still they wield,
Are powerless to protect
The barriers tottering fast ;
But, with souls on fire and brows erect,
They struggle to the last.

And, one by one, they grandly die—
Not a foot is turned to flee ;
And their flag still floats, in the evening sky,
Above them stainlessly.
Each slays ere he is slain ;
Each, sinking, smites the foe ;
And the sunset splendours slowly wane,
And the stars begin to glow.

And behold, the lordliest expire !
Round the flag they proudly fall ;
And the blows they deal in death are dire—
'Tis another Roncesvalles !
Look, the laughing Leofwine
To his mother earth is given ;
And then dies Gurth, while the sad stars shine
Approvingly from heaven.

And from its staff the Normans tear
The banner of the free,
And rear the Norman standard there
With shouts of victory ;
And the Saxon cause is lost,
And William gains a throne ;
And the camp resounds with the haughty
boast,
And a noble realm is won.

On the field where the kingly Harold died,
Mine eyes grow strangely wet ;
But the tears are tears of untold pride,
And I banish my regret ;
For, from Harold's grave, have come
New heroes numberless,
To guard each sod of the island home,
And its holy quietness.

And, as I pace this hallowed ground,
My blood breaks into flame ;
For a million Harolds could be found
To save the soil from shame ;
And mine eyes grow strangely bright—
With the dead I am allied ;
And I, to the death, would gladly fight
For the field where Harold died.

“THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.”

ON a fateful day, with a mind at ease,
A young man met a charming maid ;
And, pleased with her, he sought to please,
Till he found, at length, that his heart had
strayed.

For there was that in her beaming eye,
In the glossy curls of her raven hair,
In her voice, replete with melody,
And the smile which made her doubly fair,

In the lissom figure, the little hand,
Which stirred his breast with a vague commotion,
And allured his soul as the laughing land
Lures the silver tides of the restless ocean.

And over his spirit a spell she threw,
Till he seemed to breathe in a realm enchanted.
Ah, friend, 'tis a phantom you thus pursue,
And the face by which you are fondly haunted

May work you havoc, so have a care !
She can softly smile and smoothly speak :
But the smile may end in your life's despair,
And lead to an issue you did not seek !

But he could not think that one so sweet
 Would be the source of his final pain ;
And whenever they happened to merrily meet,
 New links she would rivet in Love's bright chain.

Her ways were coy—she would draw him on,
 And then repulse him, and damp his zeal ;
And the light that from under white eyelids
 shone—

 That into his innermost heart could steal—

Would sometimes change all causelessly
 To a look of scorn ; and the musical tongue,
Whose faintest whisper had filled him with joy,
 On whose simplest saying he erst had hung,

In tones of harshness, would mockingly frame
 Sentences shattering his airy dreams.
But, when she had deadened the altar-flame
 Of his ardent passion, the olden gleams

In her eyes would sparkle and rouse it again ;
 And her gentle words would strangely move him,
And fall like balm on his weary brain,
 Till he half believed she had learned to love him.

Sometimes he would suddenly feign to go,
 But a single word would call him back ;

Sometimes, to give her a *quid pro quo*,
Speak angrily, and she would lack,

For a little while, his earnest face ;
And then she would send him some tender sign ;
And his sorrowing steps he would soon retrace,
And worship again at the selfsame shrine.

And, day by day, in spite of all,
On his heart her image indelibly grew,
Till she held him in irresistible thrall,
And he could not choose but begin to woo,

And to utter the words that are never mistaken,
And to look the looks that are understood ;
And, as by soft breezes green leaves are shaken,
His soul was swayed by her every mood.

And gradually she, for a time eschewing
The earlier coldness and coquetry,
Lent a listening ear to his ardent wooing ;
And her glances told him that, by-and by,

If he persevered, he might attain
The thing that he counted as dear as life ;
And as lord of her young affections reign,
And call the maiden his darling wife.

Her lot was humble—his aims were high ;
Her purse was empty—his hopes were great ;
From the peaks of a gilded destiny
Her father had fallen, unfortunate,

While his had risen and stood secure,
With coffers full of the yellow ore :
The maiden was what the world calls poor—
The man was the heir to a golden store ;

And his mind was large, and he dreamt of fame,
And he knew that, in the after-days,
His voice would be greeted with loud acclaim,
And the lips of men would speak his praise.

But he held that better than fame or gold
Were love and honour and happiness ;
And that all the money that ever was told,
Of itself, was impotent to bless.

And, though he felt that the shallow brood
Of earth's little ones would haste to hiss,
If the love increased, and a ring ensued,
And that fools would call it foolishness,

He had learned to treasure the winsome girl
So mightily that, if she had willed it,

He was ready his pride to the winds to hurl,
And to clasp to his bosom the one who had
thrilled it,

And, with her, to dare the frigid faces
Of former friends, and the dull world's scorn ;
And to lift her up to the lofty places
That the father filled when the maid was born.

And he confidently deemed, at last,
That the germ of love in her heart was sown,
And was rooted there and would ripen fast,
And be safely garnered within his own.

But the Future's secrets we cannot tell,
And it mocks our efforts to read its lore ;
And the more we fancy that all is well,
When the tempest gathers, we grieve the more.

And the hopes we cherish are phantasies,
And our brightest visions are doomed to die ;
And some demon covets the fleeting bliss
That fades for ever beneath the sky.

For, when next he called on the maid he loved,
Her words were cool and her looks were strange ;
And a dark misgiving his spirit moved,
For he marked in her manner the signs of change.

Unkind were her accents—no smile at meeting
Shone from the depths of her liquid eyes ;
Where was the warmth of the olden greeting,
And the subtle charm of the old replies ?

He failed to fathom a mood like this,
And he burned with an inward sense of wrong,
For he could not think that the fault was his ;
And he rose to leave her, but love was strong,

And he paused a moment tenderly,
And gentle words from his sad lips flowed :
It was all in vain, and he said, " Good-bye !"
And turned to follow a lonely road.

But earth is dreary when hope is dead,
And life is bitter when love decays ;
And with speechless sorrow he bowed his head,
And he wept at " the parting of the ways."

IF THE WORLD WERE RULED
BY LOVE.

I TROW that human misery
Is born of human hate ;
The evils in our own hearts lie
That we ascribe to Fate ;
For the tears of woe would cease to flow,
And the clouds of care would move,
And the welkin ring with the songs we'd sing,
If the world were ruled by love.

The ingleside where strife is heard,
And Envy makes its moan ;
Where hasty is the mother's word,
And harsh the father's tone,
And angrily the young reply,
A Bethany would prove,
Whose Guest at even was the King of Heaven,
If the world were ruled by love.

The poor, who, threescore years and ten,
Arise and toil and weep,
And curse their heritage, and then
Fall wearily asleep ;

While, blithe and bland, throughout the land
 The lords of leisure rove,
 Their wants supplied, would cease to chide.
 If the world were ruled by love.

The realms that rush, with fiery eyes,
 To battle thunderingly,
 And mock our dreams of paradise
 With the echoing bugle-cry,
 No more would rave, and blood-wine crave,
 And call on the gods above
 To sanctify their butchery,
 If the world were ruled by love.

But the world would a very Eden be,
 Where the angels well might home ;
 Its music the voice of the flashing sea,
 And the sky for its sapphire dome ;
 Its pangs at rest, its children blest,
 With Peace, like a silver dove,
 A vision fair in the sinless air,
 If the world were ruled by love.

THE INEXPLICABLE SEX.

I SING the sex by every poet sung
Since language first in music left the tongue—
The inexplicable sex who cook our dinners,
And have the power to make us saints or sinners ;
To smooth the wrinkles on the brow of Care,
Or, peradventure, help to plant them there ;
Who steal our hearts, play havoc with our purses,
Inspire our odes, and animate our curses.
They're riddles everlastingly unread—
Unhappy single, not content when wed,
Exclaims the cynical Elijer Goff ;
But, unlike him, I did not wish to scoff—
My humble duty is to sound their praises,
And laud them ever with mellifluous phrases ;
Though, like Elijer, and like many more,
I marvel at them when I most adore,
And cannot fathom these sweet mysteries,
The root of ill, the spring of human bliss.
In them, hypocrisy itself can charm :
It makes our young devotion doubly warm,
Draws while it drives, lures while it whispers "Go !"
Means "Yes !" when sternliest it answers "No !"
Request a kiss—at once a negative
Their lips of coral sternly frame !—but if
You note their eyes, the answer there belies it,
And he who doubts me, well, suppose he tries it ?

Ah, their bright eyes! who can withstand their
gleams?

The fire of passion, and the light of dreams,
The liquid tenderness of love, the flash
Of mischief—these the heart of stone would
“mash.”

This verb in Webster you will fail to find—
'Twas for “the lexicon of youth” designed.
Excuse it! Slang, I know, is almost crime
To ears polite; but then, I lacked a rhyme!
The ladies, surely, can but pardon me,
For even my satires end in eulogy;
And here, I do not hesitate to hold
That, as the diamond shames the shining gold,
They shame all gems the universe can yield,
And I adore them! Willingly I'd wield
A pen to help them, if their cause lacked aid,
As, whilom, in their names, men drew the blade.
But now, “the pen is mightier than the sword.”—
I thank thee, Lytton, for that thrilling word!
Earth yet shall own its utter truthfulness,
And Richlieu's wisdom readily confess,
And owning, put the rusty sabre by!—
Fled are the olden days of chivalry;
But still, as ever, men would boldly fight,
Ay, with war-weapons, if 'twere requisite,
As well as pens and paper, to defend
The damsels at whose feet the proudest bend

In homage. But I wander from my theme.
When I commenced, how little did I deem
That I should thus rush into rhapsody—
Sing pens and paper and knight-errantry,
Whose object was to sing the gentle sex ;
And haply some delightful maid perplex
With stale quotations from a splendid bard.
And I must pause ; or, losing my reward—
The smiles I trust bright faces will bestow—
In fancy, hear a rising mutter : “ Oh !
We dearly wish that from Parnassus he
Would topple, and so cease his poesy,
Or sing our praises still ! We do not care
To learn what Bulwer Lytton thought of war ! ”
Alas ! they mock at our philosophies,—
Logic is lacking in their sweet replies ;
But all the sage’s wisdom fails to move
The soul like their soft murmurings of love.
They are not angels, for they have not wings ;
Nor would the strange habiliment that clings
About their forms—their elevated heels,
Their hairpins, whalebone, rustling silks and steels
Become the character—whoever yet
Pictured an angel in a crinolette ?
But, if not angels, they are dearer far
To manhood than the glistening angels are ;
And, verily, to them the power is given
To gild the drear earth with the light of heaven.

THE SILENT VOICE.

(WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON.
W. E. FORSTER, ESQ., M.P., WHICH OCCURRED ON
THE 5TH OF APRIL, 1886, IN THE SAME WEEK AS
THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HOME RULE BILL.)

I.

A sturdy voice is silent, and to-day,
With inexpressible regret, the land
Laments a leader. The assassin's hand
Quivered to smite him, and his stony way
Was hedged with daggers; yet he lived to play
The accustomed part, and in the senate stand,
No honeyed whisperer, with accents bland,
But thunder-throated in the wordy fray.

Alas! Death's appetite is strangely keen,
And not in daggers only is his power;
He robs the Empire, in remorseless greed,
Of one with brain alert, and conscience clean,
And heart unspotted, at an evil hour:
Heaven send us others of the rugged breed!

II.

No servile follower of the human sheep
Was he for whom the nation makes its moan ;
Bold as a lion, he could stand alone
Amid his muttering crowd of friends, and keep
The path of Liberty, the while asleep
Her ancient guardians seemed, or careless
grown—
He would not, with the multitude, condone
The acts of those who held our honour cheap.

Oh! that from out his hallowed tomb might spring
More citizens of his heroic mould ;
Whose reason was their guide, who dared to
flout
The mandates of the rival cliques, and cling
To truth and freedom as to purest gold,
Heedless of foolish Faction's fury-shout.

III.

He loved the poor, and strove to make them wise,
And gave them glimpses of the palace-halls
Where Knowledge holds eternal festivals ;
He loved the oppressed, and, wheresoe'er their cries
Resounded, they could claim his sympathies ;
He loved the Empire, and, with trumpet-calls,
Exhorted her to unity—he falls
While Treason's clamour rends the very skies.

But he has gained *our* love ; and, weepingly,
We gather, in the crisis of our fears,
To load the wailing breezes with his praise ;
And vainly ask : “Why did the veteran die
When needed most ?” while, shedding useless
tears,
We leave him, crowned with everlasting bays

THE CITY'S GREETING.

(WRITTEN ON THE VISIT OF THE QUEEN TO
LIVERPOOL, IN MAY, 1886, TO OPEN THE
EXHIBITION.)

WELCOME the Queen of the chief of the nations,
Hail to the monarch whom millions adore ;
Rend the blue welkin with loud acclamations,
Ye bells on the breezes your music outpour ;

Let the flags flutter from mast and from steeple,
The thoroughfares flash with their mottoes of fire,
And greetings prevail on the lips of the people,
And sound from the strings of the jubilant lyre !

Why should her presence awake such emotion ?
Why at her name should the city rejoice ?
Are crowns in themselves worth this heartfelt
devotion,
This glory of banners, this tumult of voice ?

No ! 'Tis the woman that calls for our praises
More than the monarch, though splendid her
 throne ;
She might wear on her brow a white garland of
 daisies,
Relinquish her palace, and sojourn alone

In the shade of the hawthorn, where woodbine was
 clinging
 Around the rude porch of some rustical cot ;
And still would the bard link her name with his
 singing,
And still men would love her, whatever her lot.

For she cares for her subjects, and shares in their
 sadness ;
 Exults in their triumphs, and pities their tears ;
Laments with their grief, and is glad with their
 gladness ;
And hence she is welcomed with tempests of
 cheers.

And yet she holds sway o'er an Empire extending
 Where glittering icefields encircle the pole ;
Where the waves of the Ganges with ocean are
 blending,
And the tides of the south round a continent roll.

But her sceptre commanding she always has wielded
As one who was proud to reign over the free ;
She has held it as holy, its honour has shielded,
And in equity ruled as the Queen of the Sea.

And though the Omega of systems once cherished
Were writ on the heavens in letters of flame ;
Though thrones and dominions had utterly perished
She would still wear a crown in the Temple of
Fame.

AT THE SHIPPERIES.

1886.

THIS is an age of vast advancement ; we
Of such a truth have ample illustration ;
Its silent witnesses mankind may see
In all the borders of our little nation.

But nowhere is the fact more evident
Than in the palace with the lofty portals
Where Liverpool, on noble works intent,
Has stored strange tokens of the might of mortals

Amid majestic courts, in wonder trod
By visitors from many a varied region ;
From the bright homeland, and from realms abroad,
More than I wot of, for their name is legion ;

Who, entering, in miniature, descry
Swift ships on ocean's utmost waters sailing,
That laugh at Boreas and his blasts defy,
And scorn the billows in their envious railing ;

And learn how, once, it took a weary while
To cross, in terror, over seas contracted,
And perilously glide from isle to isle,
Paying the toll the elements exacted ;

How, presently, man overcame the wrath
Of whirlpools, adverse tides, and winds opposing;
And how his vessels made themselves a path
Through unimagined deeps, new worlds
disclosing ;

Until the boundless waste of waters ceased
To form a gulf humanity to sever ;
And, as the wisdom of the realms increased,
Became a link uniting them for ever.

And, further on, they saw how, gradually,
The vehicles arranged for their inspection,
In indescribable diversity,
Betraying their inherent imperfection

As means by which to triumph over space,
Were all excelled by Nature's mighty forces ;
And then, along illimitable ways,
Man proudly rode with engines for his horses ,

And how the giant, Steam, became content,
On shore and sea new energies displaying,
With lapse of years, to own his rule, and lent
A ready service, him with speed conveying,

While Father Time, aghast, toiled on behind,
Through continents a thousand leagues asunder,

Chasing the viewless chariots of the wind
Across the prairies with a voice of thunder.

How, product of this contact of the lands,
The one exchanged its treasures with the other ;
And, joining in the process friendly hands,
Began to own its neighbour as its brother.

And hence were met, in genial rivalry,
The children of a multitude of races ;
Each country anxious that the rest might see
Its arts, and eager to evoke their praises.

And, further still, they saw a bulky form
Struggling to soar, and dimly prophesying
Of man's impending lordship of the storm,
And wingless creatures wonderfully flying ;

And learned how progress knew no limiting ;
And if, no more by deeds of blood demented,
Blind man his latent faculties would bring
To strive for peaceful victories, contented

To follow Knowledge to her utmost caves,
And cease from wars that leave the ages gory,
A myriad unknown powers would be his slaves,
And earth and air and ocean chant his glory.

TO DR. WOELFERT, THE GERMAN AERO-
NAUT, ON HEARING OF THE COLLAPSE
OF HIS BALLOON AT "THE SHIPPERIES."

THE other day I met thee, and I heard,
From thine own lips, of troubles manifold ;
Of disappointments, and of hope deferred,
And evil fortunes not to be controlled ;
But thou, despite discouragements, wert bold,
And in thine accents there was no despair ;
Thou wert resolved to navigate the air,
Though winds were contrary and men were cold.

To-day, I notice that mishap once more
Hath harshly visited thine enterprize ;
And how the monster that was made to soar,
And bear its master towards the purple skies,
Was blown astray, scorning its slender ties ;
And, presently collapsing, thou wert fain,
In peril of thy life, the earth to gain,
And sadly leave it, for it would not rise.

And so thy hopes are doubly shattered now ;
And dullards the endeavours will deride
Of him who bravely sought to show them how,
Amid the ambient atmosphere to glide,

And with the lordly eagle to divide
 His realm ; and they will marvel at the mind
 That rashly strove to leave the earth behind :
 It is their nature—*I* refuse to chide !

Nay, I would honour thee ! I call to mind
 What was the fate of earlier pioneers ;
 How grand old Galileo was maligned ;
 How Stephenson was met with idle jeers ;
 How all the great ones of the vanished years
 Who dared to hint that they possessed a plan
 Designed to benefit their fellowman
 Were sagely welcomed with the people's sneers.

Take heart ! Look forward to the days to be !
 Old Galileo swells the scroll of Fame,
 And Stephenson has triumphed ; and for thee
 An equal lot may be reserved. Thy aim
 May yet be realized, and loud acclaim
 Await thine efforts. Thou may'st yet defy
 The whirlwinds in their awful majesty,
 And build thyself "an everlasting name."

BELOVED EYES.

BELOVED eyes, whose liquid glow
Hides secrets I am fain to know ;
 Whose light outshines the rarest gem
 That fires the golden diadem,
Another glance on me bestow ;

Ye set my soul on flame, and show,
Beneath a brow that shames the snow,
 Bright as the star of Bethlehem,
 Beloved eyes.

Out of your gleam, the hours seem slow,
But, in it, like a dream they go ;
 A strange enchantment lives in them,
 And, born of you, upon the stem
Of trees of earth, heaven's blossoms blow,
 Beloved eyes.

THE PEOPLE'S ANSWER.

(WRITTEN ON THE EVE OF THE ELECTION OF
1886.)

FOR ages had Britannia foiled
The machinations of her foes ;
The wise had wrought, the strong had toiled,
The brave had borne the brunt of blows
To baffle all who dared assail
The white-cliffed shrine of liberty,
Till haughty tyrants, turning pale,
Quaked at the sound of her decree.

Secure at home, the lords of lands
Where gold was strown and diamonds blazed,
The isles obeying our commands,
Our banner at the pole upraised,
A galaxy of realms was proud
The virtues of our rule to own ;
And continents of freemen bowed
In homage at the selfsame throne.

And millions craved a closer tie,
And sought a firmer bond to frame,
Eager to share our destiny
And swell the triumphs of our name.
But, even while the yearning grew,
A shadow entered at the door ;
And suddenly Britannia knew
A danger never known before.

The sister isle resolved to wreak
Revenge on us for old misrule ;
And some we trusted, growing weak
And feeble-hearted, played the fool,
And leagued their forces with the foe,
And swore to snap the golden chain
Forged by our fathers, long ago,
To make one nation of the twain.

But others, truer to their trust,
And deaf to threats and blind to bribes,
Believed in simply being just ;
And felt, despite a thousand gibes,
That Erin could not fairly claim
To leave our side and walk alone ;
And in the senate urged the same,
And by their zeal the battle won.

And now a greater struggle nears—
The ancient cries are cast aside,
The party spirit disappears,
The rival leaders are allied.
They ask the people in their might
To vindicate the stand they made ;
To give to Erin what is right,
But see the law shall be obeyed ;

To grant her freedom, but refuse
To tamper with our unity,
Or, in a fit of folly, lose
The fairest emerald of the sea ;
Whose sons have helped our own to build
An empire, with their blood and brain ;
And by their deeds of valour thrilled
The centuries, and shall again.

The stake is great ! Must Britain yield
To-day to treachery within,
Who never on the battle-field
Unsheathed her sword except to win ?
“No” ! thunder those of Shakespeare's line ;
“If we be just, we need not fear ;
Nor will we, in despair, resign
An isle who rule a hemisphere !”

THE OLYMPIAN PICNIC.

There has, for some years, been published in London a periodical known as "Young Folks Paper," which numbers, among its multitude of readers, many "children of a larger growth." One of its leading features has always been the encouragement of amateur writers in their efforts to obtain admission to the world of letters; and a considerable portion of the paper, under the title of "The Literary Olympic," has recently been reserved for their especial benefit. In this appear the productions of an increasing band of youthful authors, some of whom are rapidly rising to eminence in wider fields. Several of them had gradually the good fortune to become personally intimate; and, in course of time, the number had attained to such respectable dimensions that a series of picnics was suggested in order to facilitate their interchange of opinions on congenial topics. On the 2nd of August, 1886, when I had the pleasure of participating in one of these literary gatherings, over twenty of us, from various parts of the kingdom, drove from London to West Wickham, calling, on the way, at the residence of Mr. James Henderson, the proprietor of the paper in question, and of "Funny Folks," "Scraps" and three other well-known weeklies, where we met the Editors and others distinguished in literature and art. As it was in "Young Folks" that my own earliest literary aspirations met with sympathy,* the occasion was, to me, peculiarly interesting; and, upon my return, I ventured to attempt to celebrate it in the lines which follow. The allusion in the fourth verse, is to Miss Marion L. Taylor (now Mrs. Arthur St. J. Adcock); a lady whose pretty rhymes have won for her, from her fellow-contributors, the name of "Queen of the Riddle Tournament," a corner of the paper devoted to a metrical joust of wit and ingenuity which gives rise to much amusement.

* My thanks are due to Mr. Henderson for permission to include, in the present volume, several pieces which first appeared in the columns of "Young Folks," and the copyright of which belonged to him.

IT is sweet to meet, 'mid the jarring throng
Who their faces earthwards turn,
With the nobler spirits who speak in song,
And whose hearts within them burn
As they dream of a vanished paradise,
And pine for a purer air—
To intermingle with the wise,
And “the feast of reason” share ;
And this lot was mine not long ago,
For, with such as these, I spent
A few bright hours where the daisies grow,
And on honey the bees are bent.

From the roar of the city that rules the land,
They drove on a rainy morn ;
But I'm bold to say that a cheerier band
Has never laughed care to scorn.
There were youthful tellers of marvellous tales,
And bards who yearned to soar
To the mystical heights where the vision fails,
And the mind can but adore.
There were men on the threshold of life, who
flushed
At the mention of future fame ;
And soft-eyed maidens, who rosily blushed
As they owned to a kindred aim.

At a beautiful mansion they paused to take
The hand of a "trusty friend,"
With a soul for talent, who sought to make
A ladder it might ascend ;
To greet the guides who had shown them how
To tread the thorny ways
That beset the toiler whose weary brow
Shall be one day crowned with bays ;
And the authors whose stories, in days of old,
Had made their young eyes shine ;
And from their lips, at parting, rolled
The music of "Auld Lang Syne."

Away from the hospitable roof,
Enshrined in trees and flowers ;
From the men who had laboured for their behoof,
And encouraged their dawning powers,
They merrily rode, as the glittering rain
Fled from the genial sun,
Or in diamonds clung to the nodding grain,
Its morning duty done—
They rode to a field where the grass was green,
And the clouds a pavilion rare :
Ah! the winds were hushed and the heavens
serene,
For the Riddling Queen was there.

Many the quips and cranks that passed,
And the smiles in glowing eyes,
And the glances towards the woodlands cast,
Or up to the infinite skies,
As the jest gave place to a soberer word,
And they talked of the books they had read,
The scenes they remembered, the songs they had
heard,
And the thoughts of the deathless dead ;
Till, at last, they left for the mighty town,
And the evening shadows fell ;
And above them a million stars looked down
As they bade each other farewell.

TO MISS MARION L. TAYLOR, BEING
A FLOWER FROM THE GARLAND OF
POESY WOVEN BY THE BARDS OF "THE
OLYMPIC" FOR "THE QUEEN OF THE
TOURNAMENT."

QUEEN of our little realm of minstrelsy,
The sweetest singer of a sweet-voiced throng,
Methinks the angels must commune with thee,
And what they tell thou utterest in song.

THE BLAMELESS LIFE.

(WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF THE EARL OF IDDESLEIGH, WHICH RESULTED FROM HEART DISEASE, ON THE 12TH JANUARY, 1887, BUT WAS POPULARLY SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN PRECIPITATED BY THE INGRATITUDE OF A PORTION OF THE PARTY WHICH HE HAD DONE SO MUCH TO RECOMMEND TO THE APPROVAL OF THE NATION.)

I.

THE lofty task is over! Suddenly
From Death's harsh fingers sped the fatal dart,
To find a lodging in a noble heart,
And call a tear to every honest eye.
His soul was pure; he scorned to vilify
The men from whom he differed; he would start
From wrong in horror; and he stood apart
As one who never made an enemy.

“The elements” so sweetly mixed in him
That all the world might look on him and say
“‘This was a man’”—a veritable knight,

Whose shield no breath of calumny could dim ;
Who, in the thickest tumult of the fray,
Without reproach or fear, maintained the right.

II.

He was too noble for these sordid days
Of clap-trap patriots, hungering for a name,
And staking Empires in the desperate game
They play to win the empty spoils of place ;
His sole ambition was to serve his race,
Regardless of the multitude's acclaim,
Preferring duty to the trump of Fame,
And death to any shadow of disgrace.

His was "the white flower of a blameless life,"
And worthily he wore it to the last.
No stain was on its petals, though the air
Was black with slander and was torn with strife ;
No leaf was withered by the baleful blast
That killed the promise of the lives less fair.

III.

Neglected to appease precocity,
Not long he lingered ere the shaft was sped
That called him to the kingdoms of the dead ;
And, standing by the sepulchre, we see

How great beyond comparison was he
Who grandly followed and who meekly led,
And was as good as he was talented,
A perfect type of ancient chivalry.

Alack-a-day ! 'tis late to own his worth
When over him the funeral music swells,
And tears are useless, and remorse is vain.
I hear a voice repeating "earth to earth,"
And hearken to the tolling of the bells—
We "shall not look upon his like again !"

PRIMROSE DAY.

1887.

ONCE again, from emerald copses, burst the
messengers of Spring ;
Once again, o'er naked Nature, flowers a fairy
mantle fling ;
Once again, to greet the throstle, the bewildered
primrose wakes,
And the brook, its fetters broken, all its wonted
music makes.

And, ere yet the gloomy curtains of the darkness
have been drawn
By the rosy-fingered Eos, radiant goddess of the
dawn,
To the woods and lanes, with singing, I can see
the rustics wend,
That the land may wear a token, and the earth
its tribute send

To the memory of the statesman loved aforeside,
worshipped now,
Loyal to his Queen and country, as his enemies
allow,

If an enemy remaineth ; for the mists of hate have
fled,
And the lips that mocked the living speak with
reverence of the dead.

Since "the silver cord" was loosened, six eventful
years have gone,
And the flag where "Peace with Honour" once, in
dazzling letters, shone
Has been trampled on by traitors, stained with
needless human gore,
Flouted by the men who feared it in the happier
days of yore.

And Britannia still is troubled ; and his trumpet-
tongue might well
Lend its wisdom to the senate, and, like some
enchanter's spell,
Banish all the clouds that gather, and the lions
that arise
In the steep and rugged pathway where the
nation's duty lies.

We forget he wore the colours of a party, for we
know—
If, amid the olden wrangles, some denied that this
was so—

That he sought the Empire's glory, as a hundred
deeds attest,
And a patriot's heart was beating in his bosom—
let him rest!

And the littleness of faction let us each forswear
for aye;
Let the truce to our mad warfare which ennobles
Primrose Day
Culminate in perfect concord, and the yellow
blossom be,
Not a brief memento merely, but a pledge of
unity.

Let *Imperium et Libertas!*” from our throats in
thunder break,
Till the foes of England tremble, and the friends
of treason quake,
And the shibboleths that smother strong-voiced
Freedom's thrilling cry,
Sink to silence in the sunshine of a happier
destiny!

TRIFLING TRIPLETS, BEING A SERIES
OF RHYMING REJOINDERS TO THE
QUAINT QUESTIONS IN A QUERIST'S
ALBUM.

What virtue do you most esteem ?

Courage the greatest virtue seems to me.

Define briefly your ideal man.

Sans peur et sans reproche that man must be,

Define briefly your ideal woman.

And fair as Eve and staunch as Enid she.

What do you consider the most beautiful thing in nature ?

The form Pygmalion reproduced in stone.

What is your idea of the greatest earthly happiness ?

A heart to "love me for myself alone."

Also your greatest misery ?

To dream of gladness and to find it flown.

What is the vice you most detest ?

Hypocrisy I hate—'twas born of hell !

What peculiarity can you most tolerate ?

I do not know, and therefore cannot tell.

Your favourite amusement.

To breathe soft nothings to some damosel.

Your favourite study.

My favourite study from Apollo came.

Your favourite historical hero.

Harold, the monarch with the deathless name.

Your favourite historical heroine.

The Maid of Saragossa, dear to Fame.

Your favourite hero in fiction.

Tom Pinch, who won the homage of my youth.

Your favourite heroine in fiction.

Tom Pinch's sister, charming little Ruth.

Your favourite novelist, and your most admired poet.

Dickens, and Shelley, champion of the truth.

What is your favourite piece of poetry?

The noble "Vision of the Man Accurst."

Whom do you consider the greatest living orator?

Coercion's critic, who himself coerced.

Which opera do you most admire?

Of twenty favourites, "Carmen" shall be first.

What musical instrument do you like best?

The violin lifts me to heaven's gate.

What musical composer do you like best?

Handel, whose melodies might conquer Fate.

What is your opinion of the girl of the period?

A nymph in corsets, with an empty pate.

What is your opinion of the young man of the period?

A gaitered biped, with a dearth of brains.

At what age should a man marry?

When he to years of soberness attains.

At what age should a woman marry?

Before the freshness of her beauty wanes.

Is a lady justified in concealing her age ?

Sometimes in that she finds her only chance.

Should it be the ladies' prerogative to pop the question ?

Never, till swallows swim and cockles dance.

Do you believe in love at first sight ?

Who can foretell the issues of a glance ?

Do you believe in marrying for love and working for money ?

Marry for love, or matrimony spurn.

Were you ever in love ? and, if so, how often ?

Excuse the answer—that is my concern !

What coloured eyes and hair do you most admire ?

Dark, as a rule, though each have had their turn.

Name your pet flower.

My pets are many, but the rose is one.

Name your pet colour.

The crimson splendour of the setting sun.

Name your pet animal.

The dog that meets me when the day is done.

Your favourite proverb.

Who walks "with wise men shall" himself "be wise"

Your favourite quotation.

"He aims too low who aims beneath the skies."

Your age next birthday.

Rhyme fails me in the last of my replies.

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE,

21st June, 1887.

THE maid who, fifty years ago,
With tears assumed a splendid crown,
And softly prayed for grace to grow
More worthy of its old renown,
Has worn it well, and wakes to see
The morning of her jubilee.

But fifty years are big with fate,
And thrones have risen and fallen since then ;
Yet still she keeps her ancient state,
Her truest realm the hearts of men.
Her life lives down disloyalty,
And Love proclaims her jubilee.

Pure as the lily has she moved
In the "fierce light" that smites the throne ;
And Slander, "like a thing reprov'd,"
From her clear eyes abashed hath flown.
No venom'd voice of calumny
Is heard upon her jubilee.

Meet mate for Albert, like her spouse,
She labours for the common weal ;
And every man of us allows
The queenliness her deeds reveal—
The Mother of her People she,
Well may they keep her jubilee !

The hungry her white hands have fed,
The poor her golden largess share ;
And, in the presence of the dead,
Her words have eased the heart's despair.
All sorrow claims her sympathy—
Heaven smile upon her jubilee !

But she hath felt the fangs of Pain—
An Albert lost, an Alice low,
A Leopold by the Spoiler ta'en—
Ah, queens are not exempt from woe !
Thrones cannot baffle Death's decree—
Tears glisten in the jubilee !

But they are only rainbow tears—
Love turns their crystal into flame ;
And, through the vanished fifty years,
In all her griefs, her subjects came
And shared their monarch's misery.
To-day they share her jubilee.

They honour her because she sways
Her royal sceptre as she should ;
Because, through all her length of days,
Her aim as been her people's good ;
Because they feel that they are free
They sing the song of jubilee.

They honour her as loftiest
Of all the ladies in the land ;
Because her glory is confessed
Wherever Freedom's children stand ;
Because of realms that bow the knee
And swell the song of jubilee.

They honour her for equal laws,
And as an English monarch's due ;
But most they honour her because
They feel she is a woman too.
'Tis that which makes a world agree
To celebrate her jubilee !

TWO TRIOLETS.

(FOR AN ALBUM.)

I.

THE space is small—I'll utilize it,
And try my hand at triolets—
A trivial form, but don't despise it !
The space is small—I'll utilize it.
Meek is the daisy, but men prize it
Above the yellow sun-flower's blaze ;
The space is small—I'll utilize it,
And try my hand at triolets.

II.

If I should fail, forgive me, Lily ;
If I succeed, I claim a kiss.
It may be you will think me silly—
If I should fail, forgive me, Lily.
Outside the winter wind is chilly,
A lady's scorn more icy is ;
If I should fail, forgive me, Lily ;
If I succeed, I claim a kiss.

TO MY FRIEND, RICHARD LE GALLIENNE,
AUTHOR OF "MY LADIES' SONNETS AND
OTHER 'VAIN AND AMATORIOUS' VERSES,
WITH SOME OF GRAVER MOOD."

"Do me not the wrong
To think that in a bookman's roundelay
The deepest in my being finds a tongue.

* * * * *

For if perchance some music should be mine,
I would fling forth its notes like a fierce sea,
To wash away the piles of tyranny,
To make love free and faith unbound of creed.
Oh! for some power to fill my shrunken line,
And make a trumpet of my oaten reed."
"The Bookman's Avalon."

THOU hast the music, friend, if thou wilt use it,
And "like a fierce sea" thou may'st fling it forth;
What if the hollow multitude refuse it?
There shall be those to recognize its worth;
Nor will the coming centuries accuse it
When its high message has redeemed the earth.

Of love thou singest, and thou singest sweetly ;
 And pleasant is thy "bookman's roundelay ;
 And few possess the art to put more neatly
 The compliments which youth is fain to pay ;
 But let thy mission fill thee more completely,
 To lead thy fellows in the wiser way.

I know, my friend, the fervor of thy yearning
 To rive the fetters that oppress thy kind—
 Not Shelley's soul with purer fire was burning
 To free that prisoner, the human mind,
 And bid it soar, its ancient bondage spurning,
 And give new eyesight to a race half blind.

I know that in the moments consecrated
 To dreamful silence and to thoughts divine,
 When evening falleth, and thine heart seems mated,
 By some strange secret, to the tuneful Nine,
 And every fibre in thy frame related
 To waves that wander and to stars that shine ;

When from their shelves look down, with smiling
 faces,
 The "Elzevirs" of thy delicious song,
 And lamplight dallies with the well-filled cases,

And the red embers seem to find a tongue,
And shadows flicker in mysterious places,
Thou art not heedless of thy brother's wrong ;

Thou art not mindless of the sad world's weeping
Thou art not careless of the wan world's cry ·
Into the chambers of thy soul comes creeping
The monotone of human misery—
Yet from thy reed no trumpet blast comes leaping
To which a thousand trumpets might reply.

Sing on in sonnets of Eve's white-limbed daughters,
And weave fresh ballads of both backs and books,
"Down by the summer sea," whose wash of waters
Is sweeter in some rosy maiden's looks ;
Where Mammon's curse the sense of beauty
slaughters,
Or seated in the cosiest of " Nooks ;"

But do not doubt thy power to sing in thunder—
To stir our pulses and our chains to break ;
To fill the dullard with a noble wonder,
And bid the sleeper suddenly awake,
And, through the realms a thousand leagues
asunder,
Rouse man to labour for great Duty's sake.

Sing on of freedom from the creeds that bind us—
From the harsh curse of Custom's tyranny ;
Sing of the lot for which the Fates designed us—
Of faith untrammelled, and of love made free,
That we may weary of the vales behind us,
And climb the mountains that we dimly see.

Sing what thou feelest, and the Master-Singer,
The god Apollo, shall assist the strain ;
And Israfel shall teach thee how to finger
The reed whose music is no longer "vain ;"
And in men's ears the melody shall linger
Till Eden's glory lights the earth again.

BALLADE OF APPLE BLOSSOMS.

ALONE together, you and I
Within the sunny orchard lay,
And watched the clouds across the sky,
Like choirs of angels dimly stray ;
God's minstrels piped on many a spray,
Or floated past on drowsy wing—
'Twas in the merry month of May,
And apple blossoms spoke of spring.

And sweet I found it thus to lie,
The willing slave to your soft sway,
And, prompted by your sympathy,
The secrets of my soul betray ;
Yet there was much I could not say,
And there is more I dare not sing ;
But you were blithe and I was gay
When apple blossoms spoke of spring.

No Philistines were standing by,
Our tender dalliance to survey ;
The thrushes might have heard us sigh—
We heeded not such friends as they :
The birds no confidence bewray—
They are content with carolling ;
And so the moments slipped away,
While apple blossoms spoke of spring.

ENVOI.

Lady, the rosy blooms decay—
We know not what the years will bring ;
But Love was lord upon the day
When apple blossoms spoke of spring.

PROEM.

(WRITTEN FOR THE FIRST ISSUE, ON SEPT. 1, 1888,
OF "SUNRISE: A WEEKLY PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE.")

THE clouds are breaking, the world is waking,
All dumb with wonder the nations lie,
The mountains redden, the ocean blushes,
A glory flushes the eastern sky.

In the midnight eerie men's hearts were weary,
And the earth was dreary, and life was dark;
And, in senseless slaughter, their blood like water
Was spilled with only the stars to mark.

They dreamt of Aidenn, but, heavy-laden,
Both man and maiden awoke to weep;
For their magic dreaming was idle seeming,
And the hopes they cherished were hard to keep.

And, though earth was teeming with milk and honey,
For lack of money, the millions died
Of sheer starvation in many a nation
Where shrines were reared to the Crucified.

And cruel fevers and plagues devoured them,
And envy soured them, and they were slaves
To a fierce unreason, and lost in hazes,
And under the daisies they dug their graves.

And from their sorrow some sought to borrow
Surcease by draining the goblet dry ;
And found their sadness had turned to madness,
And slew each other and knew not why.

But some for ever, with strong endeavour,
Were grandly working, their eyes aglow ;
And they told the realms that the gloom would
vanish,
And the sunrise banish the night of woe.

But the many mocked at the message spoken,
And asked a token, and craved a sign ;
And in vain they waited, for the earth seemed fated
In endless misery to pine.

Yet still they laboured with souls undaunted,
Though the night was haunted with things of
shame ;
And they dared all evils, and men and devils,
Till the darkness trembled and sunrise came .

The clouds are breaking, the world is waking,
The ghosts are quaking, the shadows fly;
The gloom is riven with the fires of heaven—
Take heart, my brothers, the day is nigh !

IN DOUBT.

A WEEK ago, my heart was like a bird
At nesting-time, and sang in its delight ;
The hours were golden and the skies were
bright,
Elysian breezes in the branches stirred,
Eolian harps in every wind I heard,
And darkness tarried, and the balmy night
Came, like a spell, to put my fears to flight,
And all my love was told without a word.

To-day, my heart is heavy, and I miss
The glory I discovered everywhere.
The thing that I had lived for may not be :
I dreamed you loved me, and the thought was
bliss ;
But now I doubt it, and, in my despair,
The earth I sang of is a hell to me.

THE TWO KINGS.

(TO MY FRIEND, W. S. R., IN ADMIRATION
OF THE PATIENCE AND COURAGE WITH WHICH
HE IS BEARING A GRIEVOUS AND PROTRACTED
AFFLICTION.)

“Learn to suffer without complaining.”

The Emperor Frederick.

WITHIN your chamber, as the shadows lengthened,
And the dim twilight fell,
We talked together, and my heart was strengthened
By what you had to tell.

Through the long years, it had been yours to
languish
Upon a bed of woe,
The daily martyr to such hours of anguish
As words are weak to show,

Your earnest eyes towards the window turning
With looks of mute appeal ;
For you were young, and all your soul was yearning
The air of heaven to feel ;

To ramble through the meadows, pink with daisies,
When rooks were on the wing,
And, in the leafy woodland's sunlit mazes,
To hear the blackbirds sing ;

Our sports to share, and mingle in the blisses
That come to favoured swains—
To taste the rapture of a maiden's kisses,
The pleasure of love's pains.

I told you that I marvelled how you bore it—
Your face seemed glorified ;
A smile of manly fortitude passed o'er it,
And bravely you replied.

You said that it was hard, but you were trying
To suffer silently,
Like him who ruled, through dreary months of
dying,
The realm beyond the sea,

Buoyed by the voice of Duty, clear and ringing,
Nerved by a heart of steel,
All thought of weakness to the four winds flinging,
And able to conceal,

From the world's eyes, the agony which slew him
Before his work was done ;
In life we loved him, but in death we knew him
Both king and kingly one.

Ah ! friend, like you, I pondered on the story
Of Frederick's patient reign,
Whose throne was mighty, but whose truest glory
Was greater than to gain

The dazzling sceptre and the huge dominion—
He was a king by birth ;
But his best title, in the world's opinion,
Was in his simple worth.

And you, like him, have borne, "without
complaining,"
A burden strange to bear ;
And his is loosened—yours is still remaining,
But nothing of despair

Preys on your soul ; no feeble words are spoken
Which idly question Fate ;
The years steal on, and still, with trust unbroken,
You resolutely wait

The lot appointed, whether it be gladness,
And health and strength again ;
Or whether it be weary months of sadness,
And one dull round of pain.

And there are many who no thrones inherit,
Or golden baubles bright,
But who are kings by reason of their merit,
And of diviner right.

And if, within the blue expanse above us,
Where the soft starlight glows,
A place there be where there are gods that love us,
And where the good repose,

Your pain shall cease, and angels, full of pity,
From their high seats come down
To bid you welcome to the Shining City,
And you shall wear a crown.

BALLADE OF THE HEART'S WINTER.

WHEN apple blossoms spoke of spring
And thrushes piped on every tree,
My lady's praise I sought to sing,
Inspired by my felicity ;
For Love was lord and blithe were we
As, side by side, we fondly lay :
My lyre has lost its melody—
There's winter in my heart to-day.

Within a home where I was king,
And she was queen, by Love's decree,
My heart's best wishes blossoming,
In rosy vision, I could see ;
And there were children at my knee,
With sunny smiles and voices gay ;
And heaven was mine, for mine was she—
There's winter in my heart to-day.

Six months have flown on idle wing,
 And, where the blooms hung balmily,
I see the luscious fruitage cling,
 And harvests waving, rich and free.
My harvest is of misery ;
 My rosy dream has passed away—
Ah, God, to think that it should be !
 There's winter in my heart to-day.

ENVOI.

But spring returns, and shadows flee,
 And love like mine defies decay ;
And sunshine may come back to me—
 There's winter in my heart to-day.

AU REVOIR!

Two words of parting by the lips are spoken,
And strangely linger in the human ear—
“Adieu!” and “Au revoir!” With voices broken
We say the one ; the other with a tear,
Perchance, we utter, but we swiftly borrow
Hope from the future, and our brows are calm ;
A rainbow flashes through the mists of sorrow,
And Marah’s bitter waters turn to balm.

“Adieu!”—“Good-bye!”—To part, mayhap, for
ever ;

As storms the ivy from the tree may tear,
So Fate two souls may endlessly dissever,
And bid them eat the ashes of despair.
But “Au revoir!” has solace in its sadness—
“Adieu!” indeed, but not “Adieu” for aye!—
“Adieu until we meet again” in gladness, ~
Under the sunlight of some happier day!

'Tis not "Adieu !" the mother whispers, weeping,
As forth her son goes from the genial home
Into life's harvest, eager for the reaping,
Ready rough seas to sail, far realms to roam ;
To face earth's perils with a heart undaunted,
And seek success, as knightly Percivale,
Through regions by dim forms of horror haunted,
Followed the splendour of the Holy Grail.

Oh! not "Adieu!" the lover falters, leaving
The maid crowned queen within his constant
breast ;
In that dark hour, his mind is busy weaving
Dreams of reunion, and the dreams bring rest.
And not "Adieu!" the maiden answers, sighing,
As in his arms he clasps her thrillingly ;
Beyond the looming void her thoughts are flying—
He shall return "in the sweet by-and-by."

They softly breathe an "Au revoir!" and parting
Loses for them the keenness of its pain ;
They see bright visions in life's path upstarting—
They leave each other—they will meet again.
Whether or no the dreams shall find fruition,
Ever the fond heart dreams the dreams anew ;
Man murmurs "Au revoir!" by intuition,
And love is loth to frame the word "Adieu!"

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